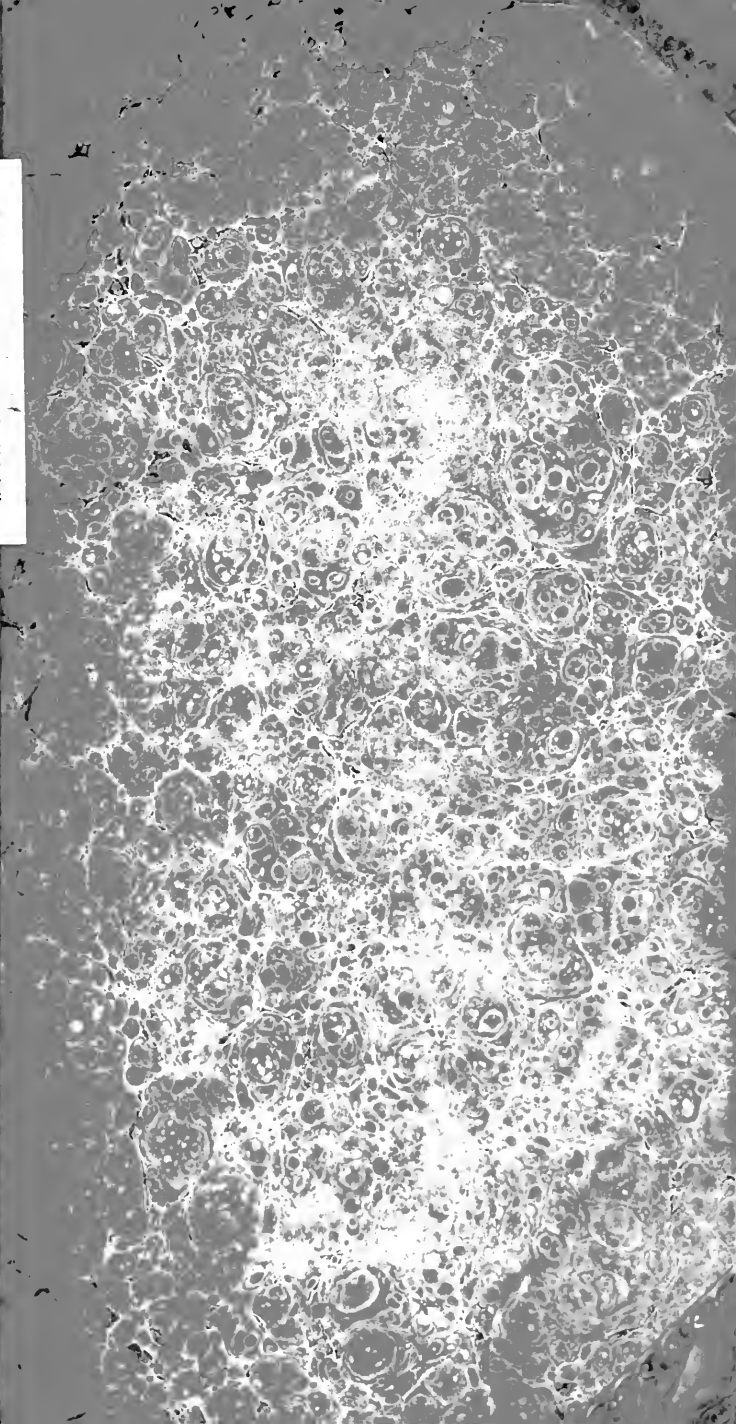
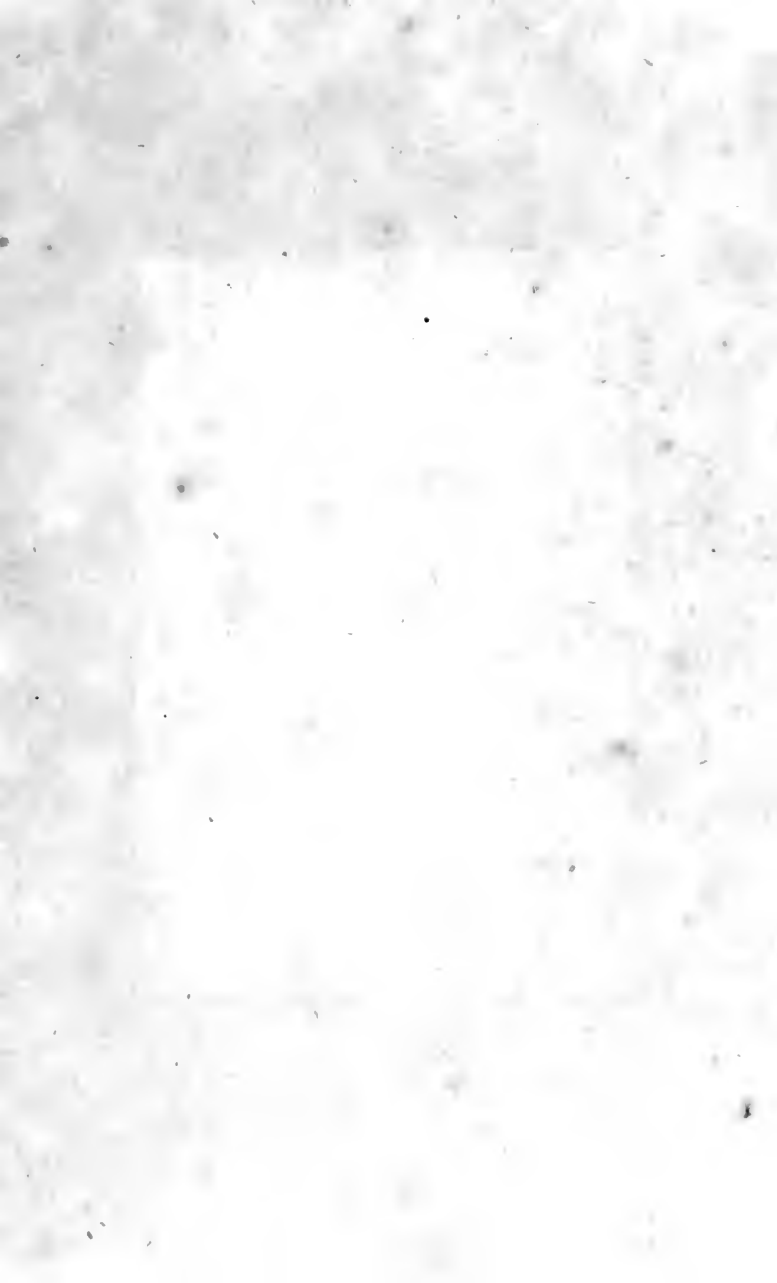


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HISTORIETTES,
OR
TALES
OF
CONTINENTAL LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"THE ENGLISH IN ITALY."

IN THREE VOLUMES,

VOL. III.

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PEREGRINATORY INTRODUCTION.

How is it that all the powers of imagination and description cannot afford nor convey to us any just idea of a scene, that we have not beheld? As to the mere baseless anticipations of the fancy, it is conceivable that they should not square with reality. But that a place, of which we have read ten hundred accounts, descriptions both in verse and prose, both topographically and poetically limned,—a place, in which we are on every account so interested, that not a sentence or a word of information respecting it could have failed to command all our powers of memory

and attention—a place, where every point of view has been presented to us, where every stick and stone is marked and consecrated by some particular association—a place, in fine, the localities of which, from pondering on and perusing of, we should suppose ourselves as well acquainted with as our native town or village—to visit such a place, I say, and find it any thing but what was expected, is enough really to make one cashier imagination for the rest of its term, and leave books of travels, topography, and campaigns to the shelves and counters of their venders.

I have myself seen some few cities and some few scenes, and with all my previous putting together of wall and palace, tower and steeple, wood, verdure, and water—the simple component parts of landscape, it has never happened to me to arrive at an *ensemble* in the least resembling what I would fore-present. Cities, to be sure, are unmanageable subjects of description, depicted so neces-

sarily in grand, and seen as necessarily in petty, that there perhaps the wonder at our erring is less. But a scene of mere hill and vale, pasture and corn-field, diversified perhaps with but a farm or a sheep-cote, to be perplexed and disappointed in this, must either be the fault of the describer, or of the reader's distorted imagination.

Certes, if ever volumes could make me know a scene, and have it in my mind's eye, even as though beheld, it was the field of Waterloo. So numerous, so unavoidable were the accounts of it, not confined even to type, for the graver and the pencil have perhaps been even more busy with the spot; yet on visiting the field, I found that I had had no more just idea of itself, of the principal objects, their bearings, and the general character of the whole, than I can have this moment of the Bazaar of Ispahan, which a traveller lately told me it would require a day to ride around.

As the sight therefore was so new and strange to me, maugre my reading, I am tempted to think that my description may be new to my readers. And the best and simplest introduction to this tale, will be an account of the short and delightful peregrination, which led me to the famed stream and lovely scene, where it is laid.

I quitted Brussels by the Porte de Halle, and jogged up the ascending pavement on a long-tailed Flemish steed—and let not my reader suppose from the length of my horse's tail that I am about to assume the dandy—no—there was not a single curvet in the animal, he was past such vanities, as was I beneath the military air, which the author of “Advice to Julia,” prescribes as befitting him who bestrides, “in the ring at least,” a steed so garnished. His most endearing qualification to me was, that he ambled *two hours* in the one—I mean, so much space in so much time, hours answering to leagues in the lan-

guage of the worthy Flemings—that he knocked up never—and that he was, like myself, a citizen of the world, managing contentedly whatever was set before him, oats here, beans there, and in Germany the black bread, which the female ostler takes from the family loaf to break into the animal's manger.

So equipped, and pondering on all those obvious thoughts natural to the expedition I was bent on, and obvious to the reader, I trotted on in a train of unbroken reflections, until the wood of Soignies struck me with fresh excitement. It is the first forest—bating the fir-ones that clothe the Alps, and those are never of gigantic size—I had beheld upon the continent. It is only in coal-countries, that the monarchs of the forest are allowed to attain maturity and grandeur, as in England, and in a circuit round the coal-mines of Mons, which was called by the French, in their allotment of Belgium, the *Département des Forêts*.. Elsewhere the woods

of every *commune* are doomed to undergo the axe every forty years at farthest, oftener thirty and twenty-five. And thus the loveliness of continental scenery is far more marred by the species of fuel in use, than even the atmosphere of their cities is improved by it.—This hint for John Bull, one of the unpardonable crimes of whose climate is its eternal impregnation with coal-smoke.

Even Soignies, whose thick shade and lofty trunks are hallowed by our victory, is doomed to undergo the general fate. The sovereign of the Netherlands had then already sold it to the National Bank; and it grieved me to hear the axe resounding in its depths.

As a vista marked to me the conclusion of the Forest, the church of Waterloo, recognized from many a print, stood fronting it, though on the right of the road. “Here,” said I, “at length,” and hastened my pace.

The church was the first object of my attention. It has been enlarged for the reception

of its increased congregation, which proves however not to be of living votaries, but of tomb-stones. The porch that was by the road-side is now made to contain the altar, whilst the little place of worship lengthened out in the opposite direction, hath its new entrance on the side where its old altar stood. A glimpse sufficed me, as my countrymen are accused of spending hours in spelling o'er each tombstone, and I had designed, for vanity's sake and other reasons, to pass for a Frenchman in the village and on the field.

I failed not to be waylaid by a guide, not Coste,—I tried to shake him off—but he was obstinate, declared his settled fee from an Englishman was five francs, but from a *vrai Français*, like *Monsieur*, meaning me, thirty sous and a *litre* of beer at Mont St. Jean would content his heart. John Bull might not consider this a compliment. I did so, however, considering my equipment and intentions.

From Waterloo the road ascends, with the

exception of some inequalities, a hill of considerable length, much upwards of a mile, to Mont St. Jean, as is called a straggling hamlet of black and wretched hovels, that skirt the way. The field of battle is even beyond this. And the first symptom of its approach is an enclosed yard with sheds, on the left, whither a great part of the wounded were either carried or dragged themselves along.

Advancing over this high ground, it sinks of a sudden, and displays a valley, which the road traverses, straight as an arrow. It is the field. You pause to contemplate it. You stand on the position of the British, which unfortunately not Wellington himself could recognize. *His* tree is no more. The whole crest of the hill, or rather of the brow of the hill, has been taken off, and piled in a huge pyramidical heap a little to the right, erected for the purpose of commemorating the action. And this it does with a vengeance, for it supersedes the very memory

of it. The whole identity of the scene is destroyed. And if one of the many brave that perished there, were to raise up his head, he could no longer recognize the spot, that his blood had hallowed.

For a moment my attention was taken away from the field and its recollections, by the rising mound and the wide surface of yellow clay that appeared betwixt me and it. A few wooden huts and offices stood here and there for the superintendants and other people connected with the work. The manner of piling up the pyramid was most singular. The clay was carried up by women in baskets, which hung behind from their shoulders. Those beasts of burden shewed an economy of time, most Dutch. They went in files, all spinning at the same time that they wound circuitously up the heap to deposit their basket of clay on the top. The leader of the file did not spin; she was the guide, not only of the march, but of the song. Thus they trudged, earning cer-

tain sous per day, by portorage of earth to immortalize Belgian valour, earning certain more sous by their *tricotage*, and at the same time cheering their double labours with a Flemish ditty, sung in chorus.

Shades of the glorious brave! are your memories thus to be superseded by the ludicrous, even on the site of your tombs? I turned to view the field, and descended in the first instance to *La Haye Sainte*, a farm and farm-yard inclosed with high walls, as is the custom in Flanders, and which stands on the right side of the road, as it descends in the vale. Here had been perhaps the hottest strife and carnage. The heavy artillery of both armies had been posted near the high road, and that of the French had chiefly played on this farm and on the position over it.

The marks of ruin and devastation, I must own, were far less than I could have imagined possible. The doors were perforated in many places; the walls displayed the mark of every

shot, or of its repairs, yet the delapidation must have been wonderfully little. The same struck me at Hougoumont. Without at all lessening the honours of the brave, I began to conceive better, which I had never before been able to do, how so many scaped unhurt from a field of strife.

The short distance that separated both armies, or rather the position of both generals, surprised me; but certainly a straight paved road shortens distance wonderfully to the view. The simplicity, the insipidity of the ground was another surprise, nothing complicated in the marking objects, which written accounts had led me to imagine. A slender black column is seen to rise to the left, in the distant part of the field. It marks where the Prussians came in contact with the flank of the enemy. On the English position, there are two or three monumental pillars, one to the memory of Gordon, the Duke of Wellington's aid-du-camp, another to the Hanove-

rians. The rising and intersected ground on each side of the road, where they stand, was no doubt the key of the field, that most important for the enemy to win and us to keep possession of.

I asked the fellow some questions, to see what names amongst our heroes were preserved traditionally. Poor Picton's name seemed not familiar to him; that of *Bonsonbé* was, however, and he took upon him to shew where that gallant soldier fell. A living hero he well knew as the Marquis De La Jambe, which, methinks, is an exceedingly pretty title.

From the field of battle I struck off by a by-road towards Wavre, whence it was my object to gain Louvain. During the journey of that day and the next, not forgetting my sojourn in the rude inn at Wavre, it was my good fortune to observe the uppermost thoughts and affections of the peasantry. The principal of which was a strong predilection

for France, and as strong an aversion to their Dutch king, his Dutch predilections, and Dutch religion. The Flemings indeed are to Holland, what the discontented Irish are to us. Although they are in every way free, politically and civilly, with the seat of government amongst them, yet their discontent is not the less. One of the most general and vulgar complaints is, that all the silver is sent to Holland, whilst all the copper falls to their share—true enough, though otherwise to be accounted for, by the respective wealth and industry of the countries, than by the partiality of the monarch. Strange, that the very plague of *brass money*, which a Prince of Orange, amongst other weighty evils, delivered us from, should be here an infliction of one of his family, most complained of. Certainly nothing but copper farthings are to be had in Belgium. A pound sterling in the current coin would put a traveller as deep in ballast as a Dutch dogger. A juster cause of discontent

is the enormity of taxation, which weighs chiefly on the poor, and is collected in the manner most calculated to make them feel it. There is a heavy duty on killing a fat beast—to cut the throat of his pig, for example, costs the poor labourer more than his week's hire. To bring a sack of corn to the mill demands a duty even more onerous: this tax on grinding is most severely felt, and the expense of *watch* and *ward* to prevent fraud, eats up a greater part of the profits. A conduct diametrically opposite to this would tend more to the security of the Netherlands, and at a less expense, than the frontier-fortresses, in the repairs of which, by the by, there has been sufficient embezzlement to entitle his Flemish majesty and his Flemish chambers to an inquest after the Ouvrard fashion.

Louvain is the Oxford of the Netherlands. Previous to the rise of Brussels, it was the capital of Brabant, and in appearance it bears every mark of a most ancient and somewhat

decayed city. The narrow filthy streets, intersected by canals and bridges, bespeak the true latitude of the place, which the traveller would be apt to forget on beholding the noble and highly ornamented Gothic architecture of the Hotel de Ville, which was built under Spanish rule. Louvain, as the university of the Low Countries, originated the resistance and subsequent insurrection against the liberal innovations of Joseph the Second; in which attempt it was but too successful. The present monarch of the Netherlands, however, has revenged the insult and opposition offered to the Emperor, by crushing the old university, in which hierarchical power and prejudices were so interwoven, and by substituting a *philosophic college* in its place. The very word *philosophic* is bitter for the Doctors of Louvain to gulp down. The Pope, however, has shewn himself obsequious, and the Doctors must submit. The city is as famous for its beer, as for its establishments of education

and the odour of the former far prevails over that of cloister or college.

I had asked a good Fleming, what kind of road I should find eastward of Brussels, towards the Duchy of the Rhine.—“*Vilain pays*,” was his answer, “*tout monter et descendre* ;” information that delighted me not a little, who was glad to exchange the dead canal-level, that the Fleming loved, for the *monter et descendre* of the country of Liege. The country was high, but that was all—one more desert, that is, of picturesque beauty could not well be found, as that betwixt Louvain and Liege. It is precisely the tract that war might ravage without causing harm or exciting pity. I shall, for this reason, ever read of a siege of Maestricht with more complacency, more oblivion of the horrors of war, and more unclouded enjoyment of its excitement, than I have ever yet been able to do of any hapless fortress.

How desperately and deeply commercial the country is! I speak this to its credit. But

for myself, who travelled for other tidings and variety, than those afforded by the price of silks and cottons, I own, I felt somewhat disappointed. With most sanguine hopes of lighting upon a mine of romantic anecdote touching the old revolutions of country, would I fasten my company upon a gray-haired wayfarer. But he was dead to all accidents of church and state. I had always found, that to make a peasant of any country communicative, and to give his tongue its freest motion, the best subject to start is the last famine. Throughout all regions of the habitable globe, there has been such a visitation within man's memory ; and the peasant is always sure to be fraught, to be full of recollections of the disastrous epoch. It is an amusing touchstone, that I have oft tried on the French peasant, and with what *bonhommie* the inhabitants of that happy land tell their tale ! In one place the vintage failed, and they had nought but pure water to season their bread

and onion. In another, bread, the staff of life, had failed, and the whole community lived on potatoes ; by miracle, as the narrator added, they alone survived such hardship.—I thought of a visit once paid to the Island of Saints, and felt little of the pity that I was compelled to affect.

In the fertile plains of Flanders, Brabant, and Liege, however, I found no signs, nor even traditions, of starvation. The dearness of tobacco during our exclusion from the continent, they alone lamented with German pathos. And the whole heroism of their annals, during the reign of Napoleon, centres in the daring and adroitness with which they smuggled coffee and sugar, and conveyed it secretly from place to place. This was their theme—for the life o' me, I could not make out a hero—I mean, for the *Historiettes*.

Liege is of most hideous approach from Belgium, of most lovely from Germany. It is placed in a profound hollow, on the banks of

the Meuse, surrounded by mountains, as they merit to be called, although the houses of the town clambering up their sides give them the appearance of hills. It resembles Bath in situation, but far more grand, more imposing, more antique, and picturesque. Switzerland has no spot more beautiful than the exit towards Mons. I recollected Quentin Durward ; and a more apt rabble certainly than that of Liege never shouted sedition. The Bishop's Palace, not that mentioned in Quentin as near the town, but the Palace in it, is the only building that I ever beheld out of Venice, worthy from its character and grandeur to adorn and belong to the Queen of the Adriatic. It is a pile more romantic than noble, the most apt certainly that reality could present to the romancer. Without, an immense line of Gothic and sacred architecture, making one side of an obscure and filthy street—within, a noble piazza and colonnade, the columns massy, and of a polished black, such as might have stood in the hall of

Eblis. The gim-crack toy-shops beneath them were not lost as a contrast.

From Liege proceeds a splendid mountain-road, which though bleak itself, commands throughout its course a noble prospect over the woody country around Mons and Namur. The retrospect upon the old episcopal city is one of the finest views I ever beheld. Why Chenier has called it the "*plaintive Liege*," I can't imagine—it is a lovely city, but from its being so sunk, it depends totally on the state of the weather for its effects. When clouds darken its hills, it stands gloomy and sunken, as Sodom in the day of its destruction. Lighted up by the evening sun, no village in Languedoc can strike one as more gay.

There are few pleasanter sensations, or rather anticipations—for the pleasures of travel are all in the past or the future, in fore-imagining or recollecting—than that of passing a frontier betwixt two respectable kingdoms. Aix La Chapelle is in Germany, truly so, as its lan-

guage witnesses : Liege is in the Netherlands, as its Walloon jargon also most strongly indicates. Though a single stride removes us from one country and places us in another, yet in imagination that stride is a gigantic one:—not only the idea, but the contrast, the novelty expected awakens the mind to curiosity and its enjoyment.

There was more, however, than the mere delight of visiting a foreign region, in the pleasurable feelings with which I entered the ancient capital of Charlemagne. The Prussian eagle, with all its novelty, was but secondary in my view. The great hero of the dark ages, and all his Paladins, rose to my thought.—But his native place being the scene of the following brief tale, for it I shall reserve my descriptions.

THE
GERMAN LOTTERY.

THERE is something either very alarming or very amusing, as may be the mood of the listener, in first having the ears assailed by numerous voices in a foreign tongue. After the first delight of placing my foot on continental soil, and looking out from my foreign window upon the foreign town and harbour of Dieppe, I never shall forget the gloom and depression which succeeded, when familiar sounds no longer reached my ear, and in their stead the din and jargon of the Norman fisherwomen. I was young in those days, and possessed of that elasticity of spirits, which can

afford to be melancholy for trifles. But as cares grow with our beards, and sorrow, instead of the poetical hue of russet, begins to appear in veritable and appalling black, we are wont to grow weary of her company,—to pass lightly over, if we can, avoid, those trains of thought that denote her presence—to welcome her, when she doth intrude, no longer with the sigh, but a sort of impassive and self-complacent smile—and, even when forced to undergo her influence, we affect to control it with an ironical and contemptuous regard, assuming often in our self-defence an apathy and a misanthropy, in reality not o'er-profound.

The German tongue becomes sweet, melodious after a time—what will not in woman's mouth?—But in verity, in first approaching it, 'tis as ungracious, as, in a similar position, are those to whom it is vernacular. On pausing in the square opposite the *Hotel de Ville*, and admiring the edifice, in part of which, still standing, Charlemagne was born, a crowd of the

young Lazzaroni, that always attend a watering place, surrounded me with their offers and their jargon. My vocabulary and my patience both failed me, and I spurred on in search of my friend Gorissen's in the Alexanderstrasse, where I purposed housing. Somewhat dubious, I stopped an honest citizen to inquire of him the way, or rather to inquire if I was pursuing the right one. "*Yawohl*," cried the fellow, without deigning to stop, or return my salute, and in a tone, that, in sooth, a bear might have been proud of. Ah! charming France, thought I, never did I leave thy shores for those of any other save my native land, that I was not compelled instantly to feel cause of regret.

It was not my purpose to remain very long in Aachen, so the German inhabitants call Aix La Chapelle. And it was at the same time my wish, for the short time I did remain, to enjoy the beautiful scenes around, uninterrupted by what in travelling is the greatest of all necessities, and at the same time the greatest

of all bores, viz. sight-seeing. Not but that I had some curiosity to behold the tomb and church of Charlemagne; the sooner seen, however, the more leisure. And as it was a fine spring evening, with some hours to pass ere the time of supper, I descended into the hall of the hotel in search of a guide to conduct me to the Münster or Cathedral.

There were crowds of young rascals loitering about, but my careful old host would entrust a stranger to no one, save old Karl. The said old Karl was no where to be found. And I was preparing to submit to the necessity of giving the morrow to the Münster in lieu of that evening, when a gentleman, who seemed to be profoundly occupied in studying the *Fremdenliste* of Aachen, or the register of travellers incoming and out-going, started up, and swore, "upon his honour and conscience, that he should be most happy to walk with me to the Münster, which, although he had seen, 'pon his honour, for the thousandth time, he would

see it again, to oblige me, as the public gambling-table did not open till nine."

The last part of the sentence was uttered so frankly, as to do away with any suspicion, which might have arisen had it been slurred. Indeed, the honest Hibernian, I guessed so much from his accent, was as blunt and straight-forward as any one of his countrymen. He had no idea of a round-about in either speech or thought.

"Pray, Sir," said he, "were you born in the county Galway?"

Unluckily I had not that honour, being, as to nativity, plain Hampshire. So I told my companion, Fearnock, if I spell aright his pronunciation. The confession in nowise disturbed our amity, and on we proceeded to the Münster.

This famous church, which Charlemagne built one thousand years ago, and dedicated to the Virgin, wears its antiquity in the strangeness of its architecture. The original

building seems to have been a very lofty, though not spacious octagon, with a window in each of its sides stretching from the roof to the foundation. This gigantic lattice has a most antique effect. In the midst of the octagon within is a slab covering the tomb of Charlemagne, *Carolo Magno* its sole inscription. Above is a gallery, with double pillars round, so beautiful, that the French thought them worth transporting to Paris during the revolutionary wars, at the same time that they rifled the tomb of Charlemagne in hopes of finding treasure; instead of which they found but the monarch's skull and his thigh-bone. I asked to see them, with all a Briton's curiosity: "Ah! Monsieur," replied the verger, sexton, or whatever he may be called, premising that he was an officer of importance, "*il faudra un chanoine pour cela.*"

For some centuries after the death of Charlemagne, the body of the monarch, em-

balmed and regally clothed (such at least is the tradition of his cathedral), sate upright in a marble chair placed within his tomb. Otho, however, thought proper to bury him finally, and transport the said chair to the gallery above, where it became the seat of the Emperors at their coronation. The remaining intervals betwixt the columns were occupied by the Electors at that solemnity. The present Emperor of Austria, when restored to enjoy his crown and free will in eighteen hundred and fourteen, took possession of the chair of Charlemagne, and sate himself in it at the Congress. A ruder piece of manufacture need not be; and truly, the honour of the seat should be great to recompense for its discomfort.

To the little octagonal church of Charlemagne, which is now a kind of aisle, a choir and chapel were subsequently added, which resembles our own Gothic buildings of the time. It contains many relics of the time of

Otho. *Otto Trois*, as they call him, seems the emperor most revered after Charlemagne. I did not ask for the relics, of which there are a precious list, for example, a girdle of the Virgin's, the end of Aaron's rod, a piece of the manna of the wilderness—all of which must enjoy an inveterate privilege of remaining safe and genuine, if they escaped the impious spoliations of the French. We let them rest, however, with the bones of Charlemagne, taking a peep, as unfortunately the eve grew dusky, at an Albert Durer, painted on both sides of the pannel, and a splendid Rubens.

I was proceeding back to my hotel, when the necessity of getting rid of some French and Flemish money, that I had, occurred to me. I begged of my companion therefore to direct me to a money-changer's. It was in his way. We entered the shop, and I procured *Thalers* in exchange for my Napoleons. Methought I had too many of these

heavy silver coins to carry with convenience. I said so.

“Without a long line,” observed the money-changer, “there is no catching of fish.”

A very pretty proverb, thought I, but what hath it to do with o’erloading my pockets with Prussian dollars?

“But if you want more by and by,” continued the money-changer, “you have but to descend here, and a written word will be sufficient surety for me, I know *Messieurs Les Anglois*.”

“And I am sure you know me,” said my companion, advancing to the counter.

“You are an old acquaintance, Sir,” replied the man of money, politely, but at the same time removing his *Thalers*.

“Come,” said Fearnoch, “let us see your venture. You are, I promise you, at the very head-quarters of Fortune, be it good or ill.”

I followed his guidance, which happened

to be stair-ward not street-ward, in somewhat of a quandary, until upon entering a brilliant saloon, I found myself at a crowded gaming-table, beneath which the money-changer had conveniently fixed his abode. I was no wise annoyed. This very scene was one of the principal sights of Aix, rivaling in fame even the Minster. To pass, without having seen it, would have been a disgrace. Frascati was a mere private party, compared with the public gambling room of Aachen—here were all countries mingled, German, French, and English—Spanish, and Italian, not a few, all refugees, bearing witness, quite against all my pre-conceptions, to the lenity of the Prussian police;—in short, 'twas a congress, though not met for the saintly purposes of that from which emanated the Holy Alliance.

Englishmen know not how to gamble, save on a racing ground. It is quite inconceivable, why they should be more nervous at

risking, than spendthrifts of other nations—nay, why they should be so much so, considering their greater superfluity of cash. But although money be of less comparative value with us than with other nations, yet it is of more importance to possess it. An Englishman in fact is nothing without it, he is a lost, despised, starved man. Now here a man may play hide and go seek for a long time with want, without altogether sinking.

The Englishman games with all the consciousness and nervousness of crime. The wild sons of the north here rush to it as a savage to spirituous liquor—it is a furious appetite, and then, whether it lead to mirth or disaster, it is intoxication. There was near me a young Russian, in scarlet boots too, which caused me to remark him, who lost and won sums that might have made or marred a prince. But he was a heated player. Those worth regarding were the phlegmatic Germans, each full of his theory, and watching the turn of

Fortune's wheel, with eyes that much resembled wisdom.

There is no resisting example. Besides, I felt the necessity of paying for the sight. So I staked, and won. Staked, and won. Lost, and won. *L'appetit vient en mangeant*. I settled myself to the table, and played with interest, winning handsomely, with a strong run.

"Give me a few of those curse—a — rix-dollars," said my companion, unable to restrain his envy. He scarcely waited for the granting of his request. He staked, and won. We continued side by side.

"I have got your luck, honey," said Fearnoch, "turn about with yourself." And I obeyed him, after three farther trials to recatch luck,—lingering and loth to quit.

My half-hour's play proved an introduction to those present, and whilst waiting for my Hibernian friend, that I might not lose my way in Aachen, and be unable to extricate

from any passer-by a plainer direction than that of *Yawohl*, I soon learned all the tidings and topics that for that day interested the gay sojourners at Aix. Scandal, of course, that atmosphere of *Eaux* and watering-places, made the greater part of these. It was confined, however, to what was visible and present. For as the company was gathered together from distant and strange countries, each of which neither knew or cared aught for the natives of the other, there was no petty tea-table gossip, no village traditions and scandals. Calumny and envy were on a grand scale, and therefore more respectable than the, at once mean and poisonous, slanders that kill or wound reputations in our little towns of lath and plaster edifices, with their lath and plaster population, on the borders of the ocean.

It was not debated whether Count so or so was somewhat of an unfair player, whether the Princess, &c. was somewhat indiscreet—

it was whether the one had not cheated, and the other intrigued with every person they ever had the happiness to encounter. The talk of Cheltenham or Brighton is mere novel-provender: that of Aix is mystery and romance. Who is to learn the birth or respectability of a Polish or Hungarian family? or how are their conduct and purposes to be fathomed, if they choose or happen to render one or other mysterious? How all this would enchant some of our middling class of dowagers, who live on conjectures respecting the ways of their neighbours!

The season of Aix was not without its *belles*, nay, without a variety of beauties. All, however, as I soon discovered, yielded the palm to Miss Wyerbusch, the daughter of Baron Von Wyerbusch, then present. He was a grave, large-headed personage, who had asked me on what principle I played. I regretted then having answered, "that I never knew principle was necessary to a gamester."

The Baron seemed, nevertheless, a highly respected personage, and to be a very obstinate and unfortunate attendant on the present scene of interest. He arose each morn with a fresh scheme for catching and ensuring fortune at the table, paid for it dearly each evening, and lay down to dream of fresh projects and calculations.

I had just made my way so far in information respecting the visiters of Aix, which, by the by, I was gathering chiefly from the young Russian, when my Irish friend cried out that he had enough, and left the table with, what was unusual for him, a considerable share of gain. I hastened to join him, and return to the hotel in his company. He stopped, however, on the stairs, and producing his winnings, commenced counting them with what I deemed to be unseasonable avarice. When, however, he numbered the sum, and dividing it, offered, nay pressed upon me the half, I was of another opinion.

It was my luck that he had borrowed; he averred—that he would and should pay me. I resisted, however, and was damned as a fool by my companion, who with the ready warmth of his country at once constituted himself my friend.

“Well, if it is to be mine, by ——, I’ll not pocket it,” said Fearnoch. “I’ll send it whence it came, though by another road. And here is the very house for the purpose.”

So saying, he began to knock at the door of some house or office, which was shut up; my friend, in the heat of his purpose, determined not to wait till the morrow. With a world of grumbling in guttural German, he within unbarred his door, demanding ever and anon who we were and what we wanted. But Fearnoch answering, that he had a hundred Reichs-Thalers for the personage within, the said personage made his door fly open without delay.

“What in the world is this mad Irishman about?” thought I.

He was simply about purchasing a ticket in a lottery, a German lottery, which he began to explain, but which I was far too sleepy to listen to. Besides, I had seen him a few hours since without a single penny, and here was he paying away a handsome sum for a lottery ticket. This vexed me, but to very little purpose. Fearnoch purchased his ticket, and we returned to the Hotel of Carlomagne.

Supper and Rhenish attended us. It was my first night in Germany; it was necessary to do justice to German beverage and German fare. A jovial companion was at hand, superlatively jovial from having his pocket so suddenly and unexpectedly overflowed. Frank he was too, as if all the world were brethren—he confessed that the gambling-table had been his ruin, and Miss Wyerbusch his hope. He had beheld her first at Brussels, from which place he had followed her through all the *Eaux* in Germany from Aix to Tæplitz.

“Hopelessly?”

He did not know what my question meant. The lady smiled. But the Baron looked grave. What was more vexatious, the German noble was never angry. To Fearnoch's proposal, he merely demanded of him, to prove himself a *millionaire*, or something very little less, with a dozen and a half quarters of nobility. Now he had sent to Connaught for the latter requisite, which he possessed, he said, if ever man did, though he might not be able to put it on parchment. And as to the first, he said; having but two hundred pounds yearly, Irish pounds too, ill gathered, worse economized, and received by that most tardy of posts, which brings money to the needy, he could hope for it but at Fortune's hands. To the goddess he accordingly paid court. A gambling-table he averred, was her best levee. And courtier certainly never was more assiduous than he.

In waiting for these proofs of lineage and fortune, my friend Fearnoch shewed every

species of devotion to the lady—learned her language by very instinct, he said, for love of her—in truth, a book, I believe, he had never opened—and propitiated the Baron by that inexplicable mixture of impudence and good humour, of which Irishmen alone have the receipt. Suitors, however, the young lady had in such abundance, that she had remained long, and was still, perplexed. Beaux of all nations aspired to her smile ; and although it was notorious that the Baron's attachment to play must have eaten up the greater part of his Baronial possessions, still did his fair daughter reign peerless, and increase her conquests in proportion as her heritage diminished.

The next day of my stay at Aix I beheld the lady, a fair-haired Saxon. Her forehead, I remember, of immense breadth, and her eyes proportionally distant, which is a German feature. Those eyes, however, were of a blue, and the complexion, that relieved them, were

of a freshness, such as the swart dames of the South can never rival. If the space betwixt her temples were such as an unaccustomed eye would mark, her shoulders were at an interval proportionate, whilst a general *embon-point* reconciled and harmonized peculiarities, which some might think defects. She was a superlatively fine woman; and no one, who had ever heard her, could think of German but as the most dulcet language in the world.

A swarm of admirers thronged around her during an excursion to the Louisberg, as a mountain situated to the northward of the town is called, celebrated for the loveliness and extent of its prospect. The Russian endeavoured to attract the attention of the lady to the French Opera; dancing and party-coloured boots seemed to be the young man's *forte*, and scanty as were the objects of his interest in affording conversation, he contrived to be somewhat elegant thereon. The Germans disputed the various merits of their va-

rious *Eaux*, the superiority of the gambling, mineral spring, or society, which one place possessed in preference to another. And, although health, of the rudest and broadest, shone on their honest visages, all seemed to think that to taste of a mineral spring, or bathe in peculiar waters, for a few weeks in the summer, was absolutely necessary for self-preservation. A spa to them, and the sea to us, is what Mother Earth in the Fable was to her giant son, who, however worn by exertion, took fresh vigour at every fresh contact with the soil. In their comparison of the different watering places, Ems, I remember, was that to which the palm of agreeability was given; as to Spa itself, it was condemned as over-run with *milords*.

“It is singular,” said Fearnoch, “that neither the French nor Irish can establish watering-places, though stinking springs both countries have in abundance. And even if they had not, it would be easy to make them.”

The Germans stared at the Hibernian's mentioning his country, or at least at his coupling it with France. And to keep him in countenance, I myself asked, "why?"

"Because there's so much treason and high spirits in both, that one half of the company would surely shoot the other, and itself give work to the hangman. Now of the quiet, pipe-loving company round us," he spoke in his own tongue, "not one the less will return to winter in their dull and desert castles."

But my story lacks altogether of that length and incident, which would allow me to spin it out in dialogue. This was my last day at Aix; and it was not until my return from distant wanderings that I learned what fortune had befallen my Hibernian acquaintance, or how he had prospered in his games of hazard and of love. This I shall now relate; though having heard, not witnessed, the *denouement*, it must be related in the third person.

Fearnoch, as I afterwards learned, remained

constant in his devotion to the fair Wyerbusch. Frown of rival, and caprice of maiden, all the untoward incidents peculiar to his situation, the Hibernian bore with successful courage and unshaken good humour. The heart of his mistress could no longer resist, but the Baron's head, remained firm in the contrary sense. And as neither the sixteen quarters of nobility from Connaught, nor yet the proofs of more solid endowments, made their appearance in behalf of poor Fearnock, the old German shook his head, and looked blank at the young aspirant. Whilst thus inexorable respecting the wealth and nobility of his future son-in-law, the Baron's own wealth and nobility were about to forsake him. One indeed had already winged its way, and the sale of his Baronial residence and domain, necessitated by immediate want as well as by debt and mortgage, was about to deprive him of the other ; since in the regions, where

Wyerbusch was situated, the honours followed the feud, not the blood.

The contract of sale had been some time concluded with a certain company, of either Frankfort or Vienna, who were in the habit of buying up estates, like other merchandize, to part with them more advantageously. They indeed never took possession, they agreeing to find a possessor within a certain time, to whom the old occupant was to surrender his rights, in short, to give him seizin: This was to the Baron the most grievous part of his necessities, the obligation to attend himself, and to be present in the surrender of his little paternal property to a stranger. These circumstances naturally weighed upon the spirits of both the old man and his daughter; and the latter, in the midst of her own and her parent's grief, had neither heart nor leisure to bestow on the sighing Fearnock those daily smiles, on which affection can alone live. In vain did

the warm-hearted Hibernian endeavour to penetrate into the cause of this sorrow and seclusion, to alleviate it by his sympathy.

It was a secret to none but him. For certain advertisements in the German Journals informed the quick-eyed visitants of Aix, that the lands and tenements of Wyerbusch, situated in a certain circle, were about to change proprietors. The red-booted Russian accordingly no longer haunted the residence of the belle of Aix; divers other suitors of different degrees displayed the same coolness or reflectiveness in their passion. The friends of the Baron were strangely visited with the same apathy, as the admirers of the daughter. And Fearnoch was at last utterly singular in the daily respects, which he made it his habit to pay.

The Hibernian himself had acquaintance in Aix, some who called themselves friends; and these at last, from the purest interest in his welfare, and not moved in the least by the love or the itch of scandal, kindly came for-

ward to put him on his guard, and to inform him, that he was wasting his good heart and valuable courtesy upon the fallen and the pennyless.

Fearnoch really was grateful. He could have embraced the little, keen, selfish smoker from a pipe larger than himself, that was his informer, for tidings the most agreeable he had heard, since he first set his wheel in motion after his mistress. He lost no time in making use of his friend's advice; and his movements, instead of being what his informant intended, viz. ordering post-horses or shutting himself up, was no other than to hurry to his mistress, lay his fortune and heart afresh at her feet, magnify the virtues, the beauties, the charms of old Ireland, and vow that there the Baron should have no cause to regret either house, land, or title, for *his* land overflowed with all good things, and, above all good things, with a generous welcome.

The old German stared, and the young

German smiled, gratitude. But Fearnoch's suit was not yet won.

In a few days the Baron Von Wyerbusch and his daughter left Aix without acquainting any one, not even Fearnoch, of their intentions. His mission was of too painful a kind to be communicated. But the folks of Aix were not in fault in conjecturing that the Baron had gone to perform the stipulated surrender of his property.

Except from old associations, and the intrinsic value of the land, there was little indeed to regret in Wyerbusch. It was a ruinous old chateau, placed in a swamp, artificially made too for the adornment of the grounds, as a channel had been cut for the purpose of bringing water to fill canals and *fosses*, but the canals or the fosses having either never been perfected, or else allowed to go to ruin, the introduced water poured over the lands, so as to yield an extensive plain of ice in winter, and of reeds in summer. The

property was in about the latitude of Cologne, rather to the southward of that town, and consequently on the very verge or limit, which may be said to divide the north from the south of Germany, vines, which are the great test, growing on one side, but not towards the other. A few stunted ones adorned some sandy hillocks at Wyerbusch, and although no doubt their produce sold and went for Rudesheim or Hocheim, it is to be doubted, whether it was more sour, or the site that grew it more desert and bleak.

Such was the possession which the Baron prepared to surrender to a new occupant. He had arrived on the preceding evening, had arranged as dry a *gîte* for himself and his daughter as the chateau afforded, dreamed disastrously at night of his ancestors and their grim family pictures, which seemed to rise in angry insurrection against him, of *roulette*, *rouge et noir*, and finally, of the stranger that was to come and oust him on the morrow. His

daughter too was not without her visions. She too had dreams of the grim stranger. And when both rose the next day in expectation of him, they had formed a fearful idea of the grimness, the forbiddingness, and the every way unworthy mien of the future Baron of Wyerbusch.

Mid-day had passed. The old spendthrift and his daughter had terminated their frugal repast, when the sound of horns, the advance of couriers, and trampling of many horses, announced the new lord. The Baron grew pale, and yet with a sort of side-thought he reverted to the possibility of the new-comer's loving play, and at the same time not understanding it, of his spending the evening at the chateau, of, in fine, the fortune of chance making him reparation at the last. The daughter had not one coquettish idea; she had given her heart to the Hibernian, and only regretted that poverty now rendered her and his wishes as hopeless, as pride had hitherto done.

The six horses of the carriage drove up in

state, the vehicle itself paused, and shook with dignity, on the sudden termination of its course, before the portal of the chateau. There appeared the ancient Baron, supported by his Bailiff, prepared for the humiliating task of surrender; the young lady peeped from a lattice on high, with curiosity, amidst all her sorrows, to behold the new Baron.

The carriage was opened. He appeared—to be no other than Fearnoch himself. The lady cried with astonishment, the Hibernian ran to greet her, whilst the Baron stood in moody anger at the impertinent intrusion, for such he deemed it, of one come to witness his degradation. Fearnoch, however, presented his printed title to the property, signed duly and sealed in proper form. The Baron adjusted his spectacles, and by their aid, with a little reflection, he was convinced of the reality and truth of what he beheld.

The reader will, I am afraid, be with difficulty made to believe, but that these incidents,

and the means of bringing them about, are purely fictions. Let me assure him to the contrary. Indeed, every one, that had been in the habit of looking over even Parisian journals, can remember to have seen announcements of these German Lotteries, in which the prizes, instead of being, as with us, so much ready money, are always estates, landed property, castles, territories, or domains. It is a wonder that a custom so general and well known as this, and daily happening, has never been taken advantage of by the authors of minor dramas. I know of no incident founded on fact and custom, better calculated to wind up a fifth act with interest, and solve the enigma of a complicated drama. For my part I make use but of the raw material of fact, and in its rude state, without any garnishing of fiction.

Fearnoch had in fact obtained a prize in the German Lottery. To the company, which conducted this lottery, the Baron of Wyer-

busch had sold his property. It was announced as a prize amongst many others; the inhabitants of most European capitals were amongst the holders of tickets, but the Hibernian's was the number of fortune. He had won it.

The Baron heard, and proceeded to perform the ceremony of surrender; but Fearnoch stopped him, pressed his old proposal, backed as it now was by the estate and the nobility of the house of Wyerbusch. The Baron had no cause to resist or gainsay, he was delighted with the compromise. And all matters were arranged upon the condition, to which Fearnoch pledged himself, and which he inexorably demanded of the Baron, that they should all three take up their abode for the time at the chateau, forswear *Eaux* and gambling-tables, drain the swamp, new-roof the chateau, and live as happy and as retired as became old princes of the empire.

THE RHINE.

My impatience did not allow me to tarry at Aix La Chapelle for the evolving of Fearnoch's good fortune. All my eagerness and anticipations were directed to the Rhine, to whose stream I was bound in a kind of pilgrimage. Except Grenada and the Alhambra, which I know from Lord Porchester's beautiful poem, and interesting notes, there was no spot in Europe, that seemed to me so peculiarly the region of romance, as the Rhine and its famed valley. From Livy and Tacitus, and the historians of the olden time, down to the poets of our own, every

genius has hallowed it. Every age has left its trace upon the river bank, and the remains of Roman and of Gothic pride still subsist there in melancholy competition for fame.

I left Aix, therefore, in all the excitement of high expectations, which there was little in the road to keep up. After the last view of Aix, which resembled and in part rivalled the retrospect upon Liege from the same quarter, there was nought but dreary flat and monotony in the road. The fortress of Julien, with its bastions, fosses, bridges, soldiers manœuvring, drums beating, and all the industry of the Prussian drill, did but jar with themaster-thought that occupied me.

“So on we laboured, many a werst,”

That is, my steed and I, till I overtook a gang of students, proceeding, as they afterward informed me, to the university of Bonn, and killing time certainly in as boisterous a manner as such grown school-boys delight in.

They were singular personages in their

appearance and garments—their trowsers velvet, and of such width, that they flapped around their ancles, like a main-sail when the boat is in the act of tacking—their coat, I have no other save that vulgar and common name, embroidered—a little scarlet cap on each head, covering but the space of a cleric tonsure—these with pipes five feet in length, and ornamented with tassels (the colour and size of which tassels, adorning which pipes, are strictly defined by the regulations of the university), constituted an academic student, and distinguished him from the *Philistines*, or unlearning inhabitants of the towns wherein universities are situated.

I joined converse with the most humanized in appearance of these youths, and chattered with him some time. Finding I was an Englishman, he wished to give me a favourable idea of his information, and he accordingly dealt out to me divers anecdotes and repartees of Frederick the Great, and other

German heroes of wit and prowess. Unfortunately I had read most of them in jest-books, and as there appeared to be no symptoms of his store being exhausted, I pleaded sharpness of appetite, and accordingly spurred on to Bergheim. And there, at the sign of the *Herzog Von Wellington*, as the Duke's title is Germanized, did I dine, and from dishes that did credit neither to German cookery, nor to his Grace's name. .

I again set forward towards Köln, as the inhabitants spell and pronounce Cologne, the French name of which, however, best bespeaks its derivation from the Roman *Colony* of Agrippina, which was its commencement. The inscription of C. C. A. A. (Colonia, Claudia, Agrippina, Augusta), still visible, bespeaks the ancient city's origin. Beyond Bergheim the country becomes more diversified, rises over eminences and passes through forests, resembling that in the vicinity of Aix. At length, having gained the summit of a

woody height, an immense plain is discovered stretching beneath, bounded by the horizon, and traversed by the broad stream of the undulating Rhine. This is the verge of that immense flat which extends from some miles southward of Cologne, northwest through all Holland, to the very mouth of the river. A knowledge of its great extent communicated an idea of still greater magnitude and sublimity to the portion of it which the eye embraced. After a moment's gaze over the extent of prospect, my attention was caught by the distant steeples of Cologne glittering in the beam of the evening sun, and contrasting with the dull and sombre plain that encircled them. Far to the south appeared the line of hills that commence the mountainous and lovely region, which forms and surrounds the valley of the Rhine. Four or five of the blue peaks of the Seven Hills were distinguishable. The prospect was extremely drear, I could not but confess, yet I

have seldom looked on one more interesting to me. It typified Germany; where the pleasures of novelty await the traveller, 'tis true, but where the sun, and the smiling scenes, and the luscious vegetation of the South are wanting.

As I trotted along the straight road, which leads across the already commenced plain to the city, its cemetery struck me to the left, a work of the French, no doubt, as the dead must, previous to the revolution, have reposed in the vaults of the many churches of the archi-episcopal city. The affected inscription, indeed, spoke its authors sufficiently,—it was, I forget what,—the last abode, or some such synonymous Latin word, *Agrippinensium*. The square wall and rampart, with which Cologne is surrounded, without zig-zag, or bastion, told at once that its fortifications had been modelled as those of the Roman camp, on which they were erected, and long ere the art of Coehorn or Vauban had been meditated.

I have seldom entered a narrower-streeted, filthier, or more dismal city—'twas so far Roman within, as well as without. An old church, with its succession of little Saxon arches on high, and its lofty windows of the age of the Carlovingians, and this too fronting a square, where Prussian recruits were drilling, was the first incongruity that struck me—but not the last, for Cologne is a mass of them. In a few minutes I had established myself at the hotel of the Grand Rhinberg, and stood gazing forth from my window at the rapid flow of the celebrated river.

The scene was stirring. Beneath me was the quay, the busy quay, alive with the commerce,—the mimic commerce certainly, compared with that of a great sea-port—of the river. A bridge of boats spanned the broad stream in a curve to Deutsch, a little suburb on the farther bank, and the wailing of the rapid waters past the opposing barges, or the rattle of carriage or cavalry crossing the wooden planks,

filled and varied the hum. On one side of the bridge were ranged the large Dutch vessels, with their poops turned up to resemble the noses and visages of their mariners—on the other side were the smaller craft, which navigated up the Rhine. The distant banks of the river were indeed flat and insipid; the river rolled, the absorbing and unadorned object of the scene, unless where the city itself skirted it, sketching forth at its extremity a lofty tower, called that of the Franks. This is the prominent object in Turner's graphic representation of the scene just described, and which in all, save the lines of a most un-German sky, is spirited and faithful.

I am not about to describe the many wonders and antiquities of Cologne; that would lead me too far astray. But the cathedral I cannot pass without a word, that noble, half-finished, and almost wholly ruined edifice, one of the finest specimens of Gothic architecture in Europe. I made my way to it through a

labyrinth of lanes. Workmen were busy upon it, but it was no longer to perfect, as yet is the fate of the rival cathedral of Milan: here the works were limited to preserve what already existed. A low roof, for example, at not one-third of the planned and proper height, was erecting to screen the worshippers and costly tombs of the cathedral within—a wretched and poverty-stricken expedient, for it could be looked on as nothing else, mocked by the stupendous pinnacles, which had, one of them at least, reached almost their destined height. Though that not altogether, for on the summit of the highest, yet stands the crane first erected for raising up the stones. The timbers of that crane have been rotting for half a century; the fretted and richly carved work of the front are mouldering away, as much by age as by defacement. Such a union of the inchoate and the abortive, the new and the decaying, the magnificent and the miserable, of human enterprise in short, and human vanity, never did

my eyes behold. How marked is the selfishness of the first founders of the pile—how emblematic of the human heart, and of the mean sources of its thirst of fame?—Gorgeous monuments within enclose the bones and illustrate the name of each succeeding prelate, whilst the fabric itself, which was to preserve and contain them, has been left an imperfect mass, a ruin ready-formed. It offers altogether a personification of a princely and prelatic spendthrift.

The monarch of Prussia might devote some of the revenues of these, his richest and newly acquired territories, to the completion of this, their proudest monument. He is prodigal of favour and complaisance to the Archbishop and to the Catholic dignitaries of the old electorate, greatly indeed to the discontent of the Lutherans of this region. The completion of the cathedral would be something more solid, than the military honours which his ordinance allows to the Archbishop. But then a hundred recruits per annum the less would be

drilled—and what are arts and antiquities compared with the drill?

Bayonets and tobacco! these are all the sights and sounds in Prussia,—

*Tutto è Corpo di guardia, ovunque movi
Per l'erma Prussia a ingrati passi il piede;
Nè profumi altri, che di pippa, trovi.
Là tutti i sensi Tirannia ti fiede;
Che il tabacchresco fumo, e i tenti sgherri,
Fan che ognor l'uom la odora, e porta, e vede.**

But I have no reason to complain of Prussia. Her police I have ever found the least impertinent of any nation. Victor Cousin, the philosopher, whom it held in durance for months without a cause, was quite fascinated with its attentions, and declared German gend'armes the most amiable of constables. And I have no means of gainsaying his authority.

Enough of this. Pursue we Childe Harold's course along the banks of Rhine. It is uninteresting as far as Bonn, except from the glimpses caught of hills and scenery in advance. A little below Bonn, the valley of the

* Alfieri, I Viaggi.

Rhine begins, or rather indeed ends. Here however those, whose path lies up the course of the stream, enter upon its beauties.

On the German or eastern brink rises

“ The castled crag of Drachenfels,”

one of the seven hills, which rear themselves in company together, craggy and copped to their summits, some crowned with castles, all with ruins. Nothing in scenic beauty can be more exquisite, than the thousand and ever-changing views in which these seven hills present themselves, as you float along the stream, or proceed against its current by the road. At every five minutes' lapse it is altogether a different prospect, the hills no longer appear under the same forms ; you can scarcely credit them the same. I can compare them to nothing, save by calling them the kaleidoscope of the picturesque.

Not far up the stream, an island in the midst of it is encountered, called Nonnenwerder, from the convent situated there. This *ci-devant* con-

vent was the very object of my destination, as since the expulsion of its recluse inhabitants—but let its pathos come before its bathos. It is the convent in which the mistress of Roland took the veil on the eve of his return from the Holy Land. On the opposite shore rises a circular mount or mound, surmounted by a ruined castle. 'Twas this that Roland built for himself, where he might contemplate the abode of his lost mistress. One of Schiller's most famous ballads tells the story under the name of Knight Toggenburgh; and Russell has worthily translated it.

“ Where from the shade of dusky limes
Peeps forth the convent tower,
He chose a nigh and silent spot,
And built himself a bower.
And there from morning's early dawn,
Until the twilight shone,
With silent hope within his eye
The hermit sate alone, &c.”

Now instead of limes read poplars, and instead of the old convent *tower*, represent to yourself an extensive well-slatted, gay-windowed man-

sion, smiling with its lovely gardens on the Rhine that flows beneath, and the *bower* of Rolandsee opposite to it, and you have an idea of Nonnenwerder.

Of late years it was metamorphosed into a kind of boarding-house or banquetting-house for the lovers of the picturesque who visited or lingered in these regions. I knew that one of my friends here quartered, expected me, and I was soon ferried across the rapid arm of the Rhine to one of the gayest societies certainly, that ever caused the old walls of a convent to resound with laughter.

The friend whom I expected to meet, did not, unfortunately, make one of the company. He was wandering amongst the *Siebenberge*, or other beautiful regions round. An acquaintance, however, I did encounter; an elderly personage, whom I had first seen on my last passage from England, and with whom at that time I had some casual converse—enough to make me regret that the occult

rules of life, which prohibit the formation of sudden friendships as puerile and vulgar, prevented me from displaying all the wish that I felt for somewhat nearer intimacy. His age, however, and official rank, which last his appearance bespoke him to possess, were still greater obstacles to my desire of intrusion. At Ghent, where we again met on the subsequent day, I happened to be too late for the public conveyance, by which I had purposed proceeding to Brussels. He offered me a seat in his carriage; 'twas accepted. And I was grateful to fortune for the enjoyment of his company. He was about to visit the Rhine: my steps were bent in precisely a similar direction; but this, though I hinted, he seemed not to notice. He evidently had no wish for a *compagnon de voyage*. Nor, in truth, upon reflection, had I; for though friendly ardour then, in its first hour of kindling, did prompt me to desire his company, I am well aware that I should have regretted

its accomplishment. What companion, be the enjoyment ever so delightful at intervals, can repay the meditative for the marring of all the rapt moods and reveries of solitude?

In despite of these consolatory reflections, I was somewhat piqued at the churlishness of the gentleman in question. And whilst his farewell to me was one of benignant kindness, such as years joined with a noble mien renders so flattering and touching, mine to him spoke rather of the hurt and the cold.

On making inquiry at his hotel in Brussels, for I was so far curious, I learned that I was indebted for my agreeable journey from Ghent to the Comte De Laach.

The Comte De Laach then was he, whom I found by my side at Nonnenwerder. It was a curious re-stumbling upon each other, evidently unsought by either, though not unwelcome, as it appeared, to one or the other.

The Comte was very tall, large, and noble featured—in short, a Goëthe-like personage;

and if I might judge from his conversation, he had united the life of the soldier and the statesman in that happy degree, as to combine the frankness and boldness of one, to the full knowledge, the passionless, unprejudiced opinions of the other.

His countenance seemed to express that he had experienced some hours of sadness since, and at the same time that he had regretted parting with one, who promised (so he was good enough afterward to confess to me) to be a sympathetic, without being an impertinent companion. His words and demeanour, therefore, at present made me amends for any past coldness. We chatted much and long, longer than even the Rudesheimer lasted. The rest of the party had betaken themselves to gaiety, and left us alone together.

The Comte informed me he was about to visit a property of his in these regions, which he had made the resolution, for certain and perhaps futile reasons, to visit alone. It was

a lovely and a singular spot, worth my seeing. Would I accompany him? I held back sufficiently, and, on his becoming urgent, consented. His house, his castle—he said both words, and jumbled them together, so as to leave me in doubt as to its exact species—was ruined and out of repair, in short, uninhabitable. But there was a convent near like the house in which we sate, which once had been the abode of nuns and friars, but was now converted into a place of lodging and entertainment.

To convey to me this latter piece of information, seemed irksome to him.—But I have proceeded far enough to consider my story as commenced, and must prefix its title, ere I continue my narrative.

THE
CASTLE OF THE CONVENT LAKE.

CHAPTER I.

IN the primitive countries of the Rhine the hour of dinner is mid-day. The very name of dinner in German, which is *mid-day eating*, bespeaks as much. My companion, therefore, calculated that we should have time to reach Bröl ere night. I had meditated spending some days at Nönnenwerder, and from thence exploring each morning the beauties of the *Siebenberge*, or Seven Hills. But like many another famed scene of the picturesque, upon

whose margin, I may say, I have been and yet never beheld, I deferred the enjoyment of exploring the Seven Hills until another opportunity. We regained the main shore, mounted our steeds, and took our journey southwards, retracing the course of the Rhine.

As we struck farther into the valley, through which this rapid river has worked its way, its features, though not more majestic than amongst the Seven Hills, which, as it were, guard its entrance, grew far more wild. The vines had not so pertinaciously taken possession of every nook and gentle slope near the banks, nor did forests clothe the lofty and abrupt hills on either side. Ruined castles crowned every eminence in almost wearisome succession, if a romancer dare so to say. Each one, with its surrounding scene, were they isolated, or in a barren land, would have been the haunt and chosen spot of every chivalric imagination. But here turrets and

ruins, nay, the very names and memorials attached to them, stood so thickly huddled together, as almost to give the mind of the beholder a surfeit of the ruined castle and the bandit lord.

One peculiarity too is to be remarked, that there is none of the terrific, the chaotic, the wonderful in these scenes of the Rhine. The ruins indeed frowned in desolation, and the green heights and knolls on which they stood were blank and desert—they told of the stern pride, the fierce passions of the feudal times. But the charm was owing to historic and traditional associations; Nature's own would have been insufficient. The discovery, I may call it, of Mont Blanc was but of yesterday. Its appalling, its surpassing scenes have no association, no link with the past, except indeed that their immensity excites the thought of the eternity of their existence. There Nature works alone in her sublimity. But the grandeur of the Rhine is not to this amount

Yet neither can her banks be considered as merely beautiful; for that again, they have too much of the truly grand, both in features and in retrospect. They reach, in short, the highest point of the sublime, ere it mingles with the terrific.

The Drachenfels is the highest and most abrupt precipice on the Rhine's brink, crowned too with its castle; yet the beauty of the scene predominates over the sublime. Indeed it may be considered as one of those singular spots, of which these two contrary qualities dispute possession; and a sombre cloud, or a gleam of sunshine, would alternately give the superiority to one and to the other.

My companion and myself conversed for about an hour, after which we journeyed in silence, side by side, both, I at least, in wrapt enjoyment of the scenes around, and of the varying train of reflections to which they gave birth. So great was to me the excitement, that my thoughts instead of their wonted amble

of prose, would in my despite rise into the quicker and loftier pace of verse. Ere I reached Nönnenwerder indeed, sentiment and the Muse had got the better both of me, and of my careless prosaic mood. I had then got through a stanza or two; and many more—more, truly, than I shall weary my reader with—shaped themselves into stanzas during my after ride. I must set down some, however, were it but to record one of the veritable incidents of my wandering; and their rudeness will bear me out in the assertion that they were composed to the jog-trot of my Flemish steed.

No—'twill not be. Despite my love
Of solitude in scenes like these,
Despite mine idle wish to rove,
And all that vagabond disease
That mars Imagination's child,
Despite the health that bids me stay
Reproach, that calls me fickle, wild,
No farther can I turn away

From thee, the better part of life.—
Beneath me flows the purple Rhine,
Above me of chivalric strife,
The turreted memorials sline

In ivy green, and gray decay.
I read their tale, I feel their spell,
Nor could the legends of their day
More fully their dark story tell.

The noblest ages of mankind,
Have here their god-like footsteps pressed;
The Roman victor here resigned
His sword, ne'er sheathed till then, to rest,
Here stooped to quench his native thirst
Of conquest, in yon darkling stream,
Here of that truth grew conscious first—
The vainness of an hero's fame.

The Roman fell, the Frank pursued,
The Empire's flowing rampart crossed,
While, whelmed in feebleness and feud,
All, that ennobled man, was lost.
Still here the generous spark was kept,
Though doomed to languish, not to die ;
Till forth, in Europe's night, it leapt,
The kindling flame of chivalry.

But enough—I must spare my reader, Charlemagne, his Paladins, and the worthy knights that issued from these heights, now to a robbery, and now to a crusade.

Evening closed upon us, as we passed Linz, and reached the juncture of the Aar with the Rhine. It is one of the wildest spots throughout the valley, and the falling shades of night

added wonderfully to its prevailing tone. My companion seemed to enjoy my admiration of these, his native scenes. He was proud of their influence, though he avoided to prove them or interrupt my contemplations by a remark. At length I said, or rather asked abruptly,

“This is the territory of Prussia?”

“Yes,” was the reply, “we are Prussians for the present.”

“’Tis a strange parcelling forth of Europe, that brings the power of Prussia hither.”

“A finesse of the statesmen at Congress, of your minister especially, which gave this immense duchy to the House of Brandenburg, that she might at once cover Hanover, and by being made *limitrophe* of France, so be interested to watch the motions of that ambitious land.”

“And previous to eighteen hundred and fifteen—?”

“We were French, part of the Great Nation,

the department of the Rhine and Moselle, honoured by our share of contributions and conscriptions."

"And still previous to that happy period—?"

"O' my faith, one might almost forget; the spot where we tread, I believe, owned the sovereignty of the Elector of Treves."

"Strange," said I, "that every land, blessed with peculiar loveliness, should, at the same time, be cursed by changes of lords, or rendered insignificant by partition of territory."

"Beauty and misfortune go together, in life animate or inanimate," said my companion. "Is not such the rule of romance?"

"It is not that of justice."

"But is what you assert true, first of all?"

"Greece," replied I, "Italy,"—a nod of his assented to each—"Switzerland, perhaps, at least of late years—the Rhine—"

"Young man," said the Count, after a pause, and solemnly, "you should be happy—you have a country. The greatest curse, that a

man of spirit can be born under, is to have none."

This was spoken in a tone of feeling, to which I could not bring myself to reply in the cold spirit of argument. So then our converse ceased, and in a little time we reached the inn at Bröl.

I love these little Rhenish inns, that is, if the weather be such as to allow one to dispense with the alluming of their dark stoves. Their fare too is passable—the fresh fish of the Rheinstrom serving to vary the eternal veal, which is the standing dish of Germany. And the Aarbleicher is to me a far more delicious beverage than Johannisberg. We were near the vineyard of its growth, and the good landlady no sooner beheld the visage of the Comte De Laach, than the warmest of welcomes, the profoundest of courtesies, and the best both of larder and cellar, made their appearance with alacrity.

Amidst all the good dame's reverence, how-

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ever, for her feudal lord, for such the Comte had been, and was, the republican frankness of the times of French dominion still seemed to have kept possession of her manners and her tongue. And even when every possible excuse for her lingering in the room was taken away or devoured, she still remained questioning and seeking tidings respecting the family and affairs of her master, who, it seemed, had been some time absent from his estate.

Her great anxiety and chief inquiries seemed to respect the *jungfrau Leidchen*—I know not whether I spell aright this diminutive of Helena, but so at least it struck my ear. Helena was a daughter of the Comte De Laach, as I learned. He informed the hostess, that she was well, and that he intended passing the Autumn with her at the Laach Schloss, or Castle of the Convent Lake, if indeed he could succeed in rendering the old building at all habitable by that time. Loud and continued was the joy of the dame on hearing this news

—pious and many were her ejaculations—the old times were to come again—and she prayed Saint Genevieve,—a Saint of those regions, though her relics were stolen by the French—that she might cause them to last.

“And the Schloss,” so she called the castle, “was to be rebuilt.”—“No such difficult or expensive task,” her husband, whose reverence had hitherto kept him outside the door, though with ears erect, burst in to prove, “for the fire had burnt but the slated wing, which his highness the late Count had built, where the family, as the Count well knew, resided”—here the Count coloured and grew impatient—“he had cause to remember it,” continued the host.

“No more of that,” said the Count, imposing silence.

“It is not for me to recall griefs,” said the innkeeper, “except to tell your Highness, that a thousand Rhenish dollars would put every

battlement upright, and make every chamber gay in the ancient castle."

"It is enough, my good friends," said the Count, "I will trouble you no more for this night; we are weary with our ride, and will retire immediately."

Mine host, with his wife, withdrew, somewhat reluctantly, though fuller tidings they could scarcely have gathered to communicate through the town and the valley of the Bröl. We for our part retired to rest, all the conjectures and cogitations, in which I felt myself willing to indulge, being cut short by fatigue and slumber, joined with the lulling sound of the plashing and waling river.

On the morrow I arose somewhat earlier than the Comte. His residence, or what once had been such, was distant little more than a league from the village where we slept; and accordingly it was not imperative to commence our journey thither at morning rise. I there-

fore sallied forth alone, and clambered one of the mountains that overhang the little town of Bröl, in which the ruins of the Castle of Rheinek rose, offering me thus not only a splendid prospect thence, but also objects worthy of being minutely explored therein.

The region is volcanic, the only spot indeed which I have beheld on the Rhine symptomatic of the great convulsions of nature. Lava-blocks are here and there visible; the green soil frequently broken by excoriations, as of a calcinated earth beneath: and the whole scene transported me in imagination from the country of the old archiepiscopal electorates to that of southern Italy, from the banks of the Rhine to the shores of the Mediterranean.

Having satisfied myself with the picturesque, and at the same time awakened my appetite, I descended to Bröl, in hopes that by this time my companion was arisen. On arriving at the village, previous indeed to entering it, I found

myself surrounded by a crowd, at first of urchins, but afterward of grown peasants, male and female, to whom I seemed a peculiar object of curiosity. They stared, ran around me, and at last shouted—they seemed to welcome and honour me. At that time I could scarcely do more than ask to eat, to sleep, &c. in the German tongue, and whatever I understood, it was only from the mouths of the better class. The dialect of the good Rhenish peasants was utterly incomprehensible to me. The word *Graf*, frequently repeated, I recognized as signifying Count, but this by no means solved the enigma of their compliments.

Breakfast, however, was becoming to me a matter of such vital importance, that I made my way, in despite of the crowd, and indeed with some difficulty, to the little inn of the *Rabe* or *Raven*, at the door of which I congratulated myself on finding mine host. From him came still more superlative salutations,

still greater deference, which as he evinced by addressing me in the third person, I was as much perplexed as ever. Anon came mine hostess, who was jealous of the sound of her good man's voice, and then to a fresh strain of courtesy was I obliged over again to duck and bow, disclaim in Anglo-German, and look foolish. At length I caught, that the old dame actually applied to me the title of Fice-Graff, or Viscount, which called forth fresh and earnest disclaimers on my part. Jost, however, shook his head, till I gave up the dispute, and allowed myself to be Viscounted, provided I got my breakfast.

The Comte De Laach joined me at my meal, and he too began to perceive some more than ordinary trouble, some more than common significance in the countenances of the good people of the *Rabe*. Jost himself entered with a broiled trout, a fresh bottle of Rhenish, and cast a grin of delight first on me, and then on my companion. The latter immediately ques

tioned him what idea he could possibly have in his head, or where or how he could have so utterly lost the good manners requisite to one of his station.

The innkeeper made a frank reply, speaking what he imagined. I could not altogether seize its import, except so far as to learn that he supposed me to be some personage, in whom the Count was interested. The old noble's countenance flushed with anger and sorrow mingled at the innkeeper's allusion, and bidding him peremptorily begone for an old fool, scarcely gave himself the trouble to contradict so evident and painful an absurdity.

The road or rather path, which we both took soon after, led from the Rhine up the Brölbach or valley of the Bröl, that name being given both to the stream and the village through which it ran. The valley is almost a cleft, so steep are its sides, and so narrow the interval at which they rise. In feudal times, nay, in years not so far removed, this vale

must have been most thickly inhabited. Ruins moulder on every eminence, while the more recent though not less decayed remains of many villas are seen in peaceful positions, visited alike by the destructive hands of war and time.

I thought that my companion, since he had solicited my company, might have contributed somewhat to my information or entertainment, by letting me into the secrets of these thick ruins, their fate, and that of their lords. But the Count seemed absorbed in meditation of the most unsocial kind. Perhaps he divined my thoughts, for after a time he observed,

“I was wrong, Sir, in wishing you to accompany me. The approach to my native place calls forth many and painful recollections, which now I could not coldly communicate, and without a full acquaintance with which, you could scarcely sympathize with me.”

“The novel scenery,” I asserted, “was sub-

ject sufficient both for delight and thought to me."

"Besides when we do arrive, I fear, that I have scarcely a roof or a welcome to offer."

I was hurt and ill at ease at this drawing back.

"It is twenty years and upward," said the Count, perceiving that a little confidence became necessary betwixt us, "since I inhabited the place we are about to visit. You are too young to remember, but history has marked to you the period—it was when the French Emigrés, amongst whom were the princes of France, made Coblenz and this country round the scene of at once their poverty, and gaiety, and counter-revolutionary projects.—Ah! here comes my honest serving-man and follower, Jost, one of the most renowned story-tellers on the Rhine, and who, as soon as he learns that you are at once a friend of the family and uninformed of its disasters, will take both time and opportunity to relate all to you at length

—that is, if you have patience to listen. But tell indeed he will, so that lest you should offend him by a yawn or an impatient remark, likely nevertheless, I will not anticipate him. Moreover his coming will interrupt us. I dispatched him before me to make what preparations were feasible; and whatever was feasible, three-handed and three-tongued Jost will have performed. But that I may not altogether baulk your expectancy, I may inform you simply, that with some other nobles, my betters, Kings, Dukes, and Counts—myself was there a sort of German sovereign, a Count Palatine, so we were termed.—I leagued in favour of the ejected Bourbons to exterminate the republican French; in which not succeeding, as you may have learned, the republican French, whilst I was beating up their quarters with a wild troop of emigrés, came with one of their divisions athwart my unfortunate castle, took, sacked, burned it, and—dispersed my unfortunate family—”

“ Family—your parents ?”

“ You may well ask—I was indeed a stripling—but still doubly a father. One of my little ones, my boy”—a pause of an instant followed—“ perished in that hour of horror—his mother did not long survive that loss. My daughter, Helena, escaped. Jost bore her from the carnage safe, and would have saved equally my little son, but that the mother would not part with him. Jost, you perceive, is entitled to my friendship—he presumes perhaps upon his services—but no—it is his way—he is a soldier.”

The personage in question now appeared to intercept from me all farther information, to furnish such commodity, and without a rival, being one of the great privileges of his place and nature. Jost's was a very hard-featured, ordinary, not to say ugly, countenance, broad, ferret-eyed, red-nosed, and snubbed. He stood, like an inverted pyramid, his shoulders the wide base, and two

small buskined feet the point. His dress was as singular as his person—red embroidered pantaloons, like those of an Hungarian soldier, striped, slashed, be-frogged and be-looped jacket, and a casquet or cap, composed of a fine circle round his head, from whence fell a long red cloth bag with a tassel—indeed, I think I have seen such upon our own stage in some well-dressed melodrame;—and so, for all the novelty of the dress, might have spared myself the trouble of description.

“ Well, Jost, how are the old walls,—are they habitable ? ”

“ Thunder and lightning, your Highness, three snugger rooms the Prince of Neuwied could not stretch himself in than I have prepared, roofed, tapestried, and all.”

“ Roofed, Jost ? that was expeditious.”

“ Fi fal la, let Jost alone for cording a tent. But the walls were black,—ya, black as the breeching of the old Elector’s one four-and-twenty pounder, when she fought the whole

battle to herself against Pichegru—you have not heard the story belike, Herr,” addressing me, but his master cut short his incipient story.

“ You will put up with black walls, I hope,” said the Count to me.

“ But the Herr won’t, and the Herr shan’t,” quoth Jost, “ for I have set every kudue round the lake to whitewash forthwith.”

“ Whitewash the Laach Schloss?” cried the Count.

“ Whitewash the castle of the Convent Lake?” cried I.

“ Let us hurry to prevent the profanation.”

“ Thunder and lightning,” said the offended Jost, “ as if whiting and pipe-clay could not make a castle spruce, ya, and strong too, as well as make a soldier pass review.”

“ You are a Goth, Jost,” said the Count.

“ Na, your Highness, that I am not, not a bit of Saxon great or small, but an old Palatine, and a son of Father Rhine.”

The Count hurried on without waiting for any farther of Jost's exculpations. We were soon at the foot of the Veitsberg, a noble mountain, from whence Jost informed me, I might look down into the Laach Schloss, nay, to the very bottom of the lake itself, if my sight could penetrate so far—a kind of proviso, that would improve many prospects. As we turned the mountain, we gradually came in view of the Convent Lake, and the Schloss in question. But its description I reserve for another chapter.

CHAPTER II.

As we partly mounted the Veitsberg, needlessly it seemed, except for the purpose of attaining an imposing view of the place whither we journeyed, before we arrived, we looked down, certainly, on the most magnificent scene in the neighbourhood of the Rhine, the Seven Hills themselves scarcely excepted. We had ascended considerably since we had left Bröl, and even the valley which we had lately trodden, was far above the level of the great river. What then was my surprise, surprise truly, in despite of my having been led to expect it, to find a considerable lake

reposing thus high. It lay at the foot of the Veitsberg, amongst a number of beautiful hills, all clothed with trees and vegetation—villas and villages were scattered round, the long white fronts of the former, and the twin steeples that rose from each church of the latter, enlivening the animated prospect. With this was contrasted the barren brow of the lordly Veitsberg, rugged and of variegated hue, here rearing up its granite peaks, and there displaying dark and gloomy spots, where lava blocks still rested.

It instantly recalled the lake of Avernus to my mind, or that of Albano; the Convent Lake was, like them, volcanic, as its pale blue and transparent waters would have alone evinced, if there were not abundant proofs around, in the lava, in volcanic springs, and exhalations, like those of the Solfaterra, and Agnano. As we rapidly descended to it, the old Count being more eager than even myself or Jost, I was enabled gradually to mark

the object, to which my interest had been previously directed.

At a short distance from the Lake, and separated from it by a slip of level ground, stood the Convent which gave its best known name to the Lake. It had been the abode and property of a rich Benedictine brotherhood, that claimed, ere the French had appropriated the territory to themselves, and abolished every feudal remnant therein resting, to hold in vassalage the chief nobles of the country. They asserted the same claim over the property of the Counts of Altenberg, the representative of which was better known of late years, as he preferred, by the name of the Comte De Laach—and I too prefer the name, that of Altenberg being already celebrated in the pages of one of Miss Edgeworth's happiest works of fiction, though chance, not locality, must have supplied her with the name.

The good Benedictines, however, never up-

held their claim beyond the walls of their refectory, as such, coming to the ears of any of the succeeding Counts of Altenberg or Laach, might have seriously endangered their repose.

The Castle was also on the borders of the Lake, at some distance from the monastery, and on the only mound or eminence that rose immediately from its brink. It presented the usual aspect of old Rhenish castles, its great square tower or donjon, its lower line of battlements, and at each corner a round tower springing. A fosse cut around it had of old been filled with the waters of the lake, and perhaps still remained so during the months of winter; for the present, however, it was dry, and afforded the only access to the ruins, whatever bridge formerly traversed it, being utterly destroyed.

The work of whitewashing, fortunately, had not been begun, and we were in time to cast out the preparations, that Jost had countenanced, into the lake. One wing of it was

yet black, as the domestic had represented, but not more than what added to the warlike and venerable look of the edifice. To it had been appended some sort of a modern mansion by the former Count, who, making courts his principal residence, could not abide, even for the few weeks which he devoted in the summer to his hereditary castle, the small and gloomy apartments, the narrow passages and cremelated apertures, that spoke to him of gloom and barbarism, and produced an intolerable effect upon his spirits. In short, the old castle always afflicted him with fits of the spleen; and he accordingly appended a modern chateau to it, which fire and the enemy had taken vengeance on, with more taste than generally marks the operations of such devastators.

Both Jost, however, and his master, had exaggerated the ruinous state of the ancient building. The vaulted roof was almost whole, though the lead had been stripped from it;

and Jost's boasted roofing was confined to stopping a few apertures with straw. The necessary furniture already transported, made two or three apartments look very habitable, at least beneath a summer's sun. And the Count felt so satisfied, that he ordered a messenger to be dispatched forthwith to Mayence (Coblentz, though nearer, and a *chef lieu* during the dominion of the French, as well as the residence of the Elector of Treves previously, not abounding in expert artizans, or in the produce of their handy-work), in order that every thing requisite for the perfect repair and furnishing of the castle might be expedited down by the Rhine as speedily as possible.

Statesman as was the Count, and by profession a meddler in the important affairs of modern states and of European politics in general, he still felt pleasure in the planning for masons and carpenters; and he, whose head had been usefully and well employed in the business of a Congress, seemed equally

intent, and far more happy, in acting the domestic architect, and in issuing orders, with precision too, for the manufacture of chairs and tables.

“I am appointed for the moment,” said the Count, “to preside over a commission at Mayence, charged with examining into the secret societies which prevail throughout Germany, and especially in the universities of the smaller states. And, a garrison town not being the most delightful of residences to a man, like myself, fond of retirement, and of intellectual society, if of any, I must make my old castle here an excuse for not taking up my abode in Mayence amidst its crowd of Commandants and Hussar Princes. I have bidden some friends to it, provisionally, if I found it habitable, and that I do find it so, I shall immediately dispatch them word. Your purpose is to kill time with some profit, and explore the Rhine. Let this be your head-quarters. A chest of books yonder will have more

fellows. Besides, my daughter will be here ; one of your own countrymen too, I expect amongst others. Come and go, and be at home. Our business at Mayence will be slack during the summer months, I imagine, while each high employé is endeavouring to charm away his maladies and his ennui at the several baths, as the gay summer towns of resort are called, which are blessed with mineral springs and picturesque environs. So here you will always find me. Let us, however, converse for a week or so, to cement our friendship, and then guide your ways according to your humour. These things are best regulated at once, and at first. And remember, ceremony dwells in the hundred courts on the other side of the Rhine ; here she is utterly a stranger."

I agreed perfectly with the Count, thanked him, and made up my own mind to how much of his hospitality I would trespass on. Jost installed me in my chamber, which, with more romance than comfort, happened to be that

of the Western Tower, the interior of the said tower forming a kind of cabinet to my chamber, and being scarcely screened from it by what once had been a door, the winds and waters made their way in with a freedom, that, however little one might have regarded such in the latitude of Naples, in that of Coblentz it was certainly incommodious.

Little happened worthy of my attention or remembrance for several days, unless, indeed, that I was once or twice beset by a very ancient and venerable-looking friar, who seemed to take an unaccountable interest in watching and following my steps. A nimble climber, and a quick traverser of a country, whose aspect inspires me with any interest, my gowned and cinctured shadow, for such he almost made himself appear, never failed to cross and to re-cross my track ; till at length, wearied with his assiduity, and feeling that in nervous and sombre hours the thoughts and image of the fellow seemed to haunt my

mind, as much as his actual person did my steps when wandering, I resolved to commune with the fiend, if such he should prove.

I found him, however, nothing more than an active, inquisitive old man. He seemed to have taken into his credulity the same mistake that had procured me such honour at Bröl, and wanted to discover whether or not the Comte De Laach had adopted, or considered me as his son. I soon undeceived the friar, and as by so doing I had acquired, methought, some right to his confidence, I questioned him in turn, not doubting but that from his gray hairs, I should extract some story or information, either amusing to me or useful.

He had been a friar of the old convent—a happy friar, he said, when he could beg the whole year round from door to door, or under pretence of begging, visit cottage after castle and castle after cottage, and meet a welcome in all. The happiness of human life seemed

to him to consist in begging—he regretted that blissful state, and was not to be consoled for being deprived of it.

The French, when they destroyed the convent and appropriated its revenues, had dispersed the brotherhood, and despoiled them not only of their abode, but of their sanctity, by granting to the uncloistered friars a moderate pension each. This, along with the dissemination of French ideas, during the Republican and Imperial rule, had hardened every heart against them—their old votaries were no longer ready to exchange an alms for a blessing—and the village boys, instead of running, as of old, in reverence to kiss their *ostensoire* or relic-box, hooted at the sandaled wanderers whenever they passed, and pursued them with mud and missiles. Few, indeed, were obstinate or zealous enough to retain the old habit of the order:—none, indeed, until after the fall of Napoleon, when hoping to recover from the good will of the Prussian

monarch, what they had lost from his revolutionary enemies, the poor remnant of the monks of Laach resumed their gowns, their cords, and tonsures, with a prospective view of being re-installed in their abbey.

Friar Guy was one of these. Day after day they were anxiously negotiating that at least the abbey walls might be restored to them, which his Majesty of Prussia would willingly, out of his known love to Catholicism, have granted them, if he knew how to repay the purchase-money which the existing proprietors had paid at the revolutionary sale, a pact that by treaty the monarch was bound to respect.

Now the Comte De Laach was known to be high in the favour and confidence of his sovereign. He had himself become proprietor of the greater part of the abbey lands, and the abbey itself, which he had under-let to a kind of half farmer, half innkeeper. To assail the Count in the proper time and place, to

strike upon the right topic of interest to him, and win his attention first to their desires, was the great object of Friar Guy. The noise of the Count's having either found or adopted a son, alarmed the friar and impelled him to seek an interview with me. One of these events, indeed, he, better than any man, knew to be impossible; since he himself had been present at the fire of the castle, had penetrated amongst its smoking ruins, and knew as well, as even Jost himself, what had been saved, and what perished. The Count's adopting any one would have been equally fatal to the old convent's interest, as such a step could but be taken in order to preserve the family name; and with such a determination, the dismembering of any of the property would scarcely harmonize.

I relieved his anxiety by stating who I was, for how short a time, and how slightly acquainted with the Count. And as I spoke him gently, feeling even more commiseration

than dislike for the sandal-shoon, his old heart either yearned towards me in kindness, or else he thought it expedient to make a friend, especially one resident in the castle of the Comte de Laach, by any means and with what haste he could. The cunning old fellow was not long in finding out my weak side, and he took advantage of it by pouring in my ear at every opportunity the old legends of the Rhine, and the more modern events that befel, and anecdotes that respect, the lovely and parcelled out territories along its banks. I found accordingly the old monk a far more agreeable, and less impertinent source of information than my friend Jost, to whom the Count had recommended me.

The Castle of the Convent Lake was in the mean time filled with furniture and visitors. The shattered battlements resumed their warlike and embrasured line—the burnt and blackened pannelling of the interior was o’erhung with tapestry—each turret boasted

an habitant, and the hall once more resounded with the temperate and gay banquet, nay, once or oftener, as occasion prompted, witnessed the joyous wassail, worthy of olden times. Diplomatsists from Frankfort and all the mock importance of the German Diet now arrived; now a Professor, freed for a month's vacation from his lecturing duties at the universities—the learned Schlegel, for example, from his new chair at Bonn—German dowagers, some of the old powdered school of formality, who seemed to have kept their gravity and etiquette safe *en papillote* during the rude reign of French influence, so fresh, yet so antiquated, were these now produced—other dames too, of other schools more *debonnaire*, from the fashionable and not over precise circles of München or Wien, who had come to improve their health, air their reputation, and increase their stock of scandal, by a tour through the watering-places. And this year Prince Metternich had chosen Johannisberg

for his summer residence; and it behoved husbands and fathers to give up Tæplitz and Carlsbad immediately, and proceed more westward to do homage at once to Fader Metternich and Fader Rhein. Perhaps a dandy of my own nation would make his appearance betimes, a scene-hunter like myself, or a melomane. But they were afflicted with that English disease, the fidgets, which I shall not dignify by the name of ennui; over night, indeed, they contrived to drown the foul fiend in draughts of Rhenish; on the morrow, however, it was found infallibly that they had fled from their natural enemy ere cock-crow.

At length arrived the Count's fair daughter, Helena—fair indeed, of that happy mixture of French and German beauty, which unites the piquancy and inimitable grace of the one to the full and generous charms of the latter. She came, accompanied by,—I hope I translate the degree of affinity aright—a great-

grand-aunt ; and both great and grand, in every sense of the word, was Madam Milberghausen. With her, it seemed, Helena De Laach had been chiefly resident during the wars, wanderings, diplomatic and political missions of her parent. Mannheim, the old capital of the Palatinate, was Mrs. Milberghausen's place of nativity and residence, and there, in that pleasant city, by the Rhine's brink, had Helena grown in loveliness, in enthusiasm, and, in despite of her very great-grand-aunt's positive prohibition, in feeling also.

The old lady was most minute and loud in her details of, and remarks on, an incident, which at that period occupied the mouths and interests of Europe—which appalled many a servile heart—filled many a young and heated mind with wild and criminal emulation, and brought deep regret to the calm and sager lovers of Germany, who saw at once its disastrous consequences. I allude to the assassination of the mercenary spy of a great northern

power, in the person of a man of letters, a native of Germany, and one whose talents should have raised him above such baseness. This had taken place at Manheim. And as the commission over which the Count presided had been appointed on account of this very event, the old lady was determined to afford to him all the information, not to be told in a small compass, that she had gathered respecting the subject.

I listened to the old lady with far more patience than did the Count, and at the same time was not long in perceiving that Helena, although she too listened, seemed not to agree with her aunt's conclusions, nor yet to listen to her strictures with patience. The young girl would even at times venture upon an interruption, such as,

“Now you know, aunt, the young student never beheld the —— in his life before, and therefore could have no personal animosity to-

wards him, no quarrel to revenge, but that of his country."

"Country—fiddlestrings, girl! how dare any honest German pretend to know what country he is of, until the next Vienna almanack come to inform him? Do not prattle politics, I tell you, for the eleven hundredth time."

"I feel for all, who speak the same language with me, as for brethren of the same land."

"What a spoiled century is this, Count, when girls dare even to take interest in questions, that would require all the sagacity of their grandmothers to comprehend. Nay, they have their wishes, not of hearts, and stars, and diamond necklaces, but of national glory, national liberty, union, independence, and such like. Here your daughter dreams of uniting all *Deutsch-land*!"

"Doth she in sooth? I love the wench for the high thought. Though I fear, she will

never see the Austrian and Prussian eagles pinioned together into one ensign."

"And a very pretty popinjay they would both make for a band of free-shooters to take aim at," observed the vivacious Helena.

"Ha, ha! my pretty maiden," cried the alarmed father, "be these your principles, this the wit ye have learned at Manheim? Where may this arise from, good Madame the Baroness Milberghausen?"

The old lady shrunk from the severe glance that accompanied the question. She, however, pleaded her excuse with sullied gravity, vowed that she had kept her young ward's attention aloof from all such considerations, as far as was practicable in the present degenerate and easy ways of society, which there was no escaping from but in seclusion. But indeed Heidelberg and its university were so near Manheim, that all the youth of both sexes were become inoculated with the wild and pernicious ideas of the students.

“Has Helena made acquaintance with any of those students?” demanded the Count, without leaving apparent any of the keenness, that dictated the question.

Helena’s upper lip was dragged betwixt her teeth.

“Indeed,” said Milberghausen, “it would have been impossible to avoid the students altogether. And there are exceptions, you know—”

“That I have not the pleasure of knowing, though my daughter has been pleased to make them; is it not so, my girl?”

Helena did not answer, and her aunt was about to enter upon an expostulation, for her choler was rising, when the Count turned it off with,

“Well, Leidchen, I hope you do not know any of the young band, who have commenced their lives and studies by the perpetration, at least the favouring, of private murder?”

The flush that was already crimsoning He-

lena's cheek, at this observation gave place to paler. The Count remarked it, thought an instant, then seemed to smile at the absurdity of the suspicion that had crossed him, rested satisfied that the mere allusion to murder, or the utterance of the word, had been sufficient to shock the feminine nerves of his daughter, kissed her, and directed his attentions to another visiter, his thoughts to another topic.

CHAPTER III.

ABOUT three mornings after the conversation which concluded the last chapter, a very inconvenient and unaccountable accident befel me. I am almost ashamed to relate it, as an adventure taking place in the feudal castle of a Count Palatine, on the Rhine, where nothing less respectable than a ghost, a bandit, or an assassin, ought, for the verity of romance, to cross the sojourner. But I forget, that I might have been indebted for it to a goblin or sprite, though it was a most unsprightly trick.

I had then, and still preserve, a custom to lock my door, especially in strange places, as securely as may be. This I failed not to do, going to rest. On awakening, however, the door

was open, and my clothes—not either valise or purse, for the former was unrifled, and the latter lay, placed expressly on a chair—my coat, vest, and pantaloons had disappeared utterly. There was not a trace of them. I bel-
lowed for Jost : Jost came, shrugged his broad shoulders, put one eye-brow up in wonderment, whilst the other went down in suspicion, but he could neither explain, nor help me. My wardrobe was of the scantiest, and I was compelled to step down stairs to breakfast *en grand tenue*, as if to a ball or to a dinner of ceremony. I told my story—some disbelieved me—others laughed—the Count questioned Jost, got the same explanation that I did, and, like a great politician, forgot both me and the circumstance the next moment, more especially as he was posed and perplexed by the first page of a new pamphlet, which M. Gentz had been good enough to send for his perusal. Jost somewhat consoled me for the laughter of Helena, which was sorer to me than all the

rest, by the assurance that for a few *thalers* he would replenish my wardrobe from Coblantz. He vowed, he knew my measure at a glance, eke the reigning fashions, and that I should be supplied forthwith. On sallying out, my hat was gone also, so I was compelled to promenade *en casquet*. To crown my disasters, the nether garment that Jost brought back from Coblantz, was red—scarlet was never died more brilliant.—And there was I, like Pope's earliest friend,

“Honest, hatless Cromwel, with red breeches.”

My mishaps, immortalized by their last climax in their strangeness, formed of course now and then a subject of remark. I tried all upon the point, Jost, Friar Guy, the domestics, any of the young sparks, whom I thought likely to play a practical joke upon a stranger—but none smiled or winced. More singular than all the circumstances did it appear to me, on remarking it to myself, that Helena was the only person who, by an invo-

luntary smile at times, when the subject was alluded to, betrayed a symptom of knowledge, if not complicity, in the larceny. But then her smile, when such took place, was always followed, or perhaps checked by a sigh, an aspect so woeful and pensive, that I always banished the thought upon the instant.

I resolved, however, to be more chary of my inexpressibles, especially in a country where they could be replaced but by scarlet ones; and accordingly I lay more wakeful, than is my wont, in my chamber of the western turret. It was either owing to chance, or to this resolution, that, lying awake one night, I heard a footstep stealthily cross my chamber. I looked. A figure crossed the window, and so became manifest to me even in the obscurity. It crossed, moreover, not from the door of the chamber, but to it, turned back the precautionary bolt, on which I had so much depended, and tripped along the corridor. I rose hastily, though without disturbance, and

followed this nocturnal visitant. He knew well the windings of every passage, but at length I discovered him at some distance from me in whispering dialogue with another, with a female voice. I conjectured this to be the domestic of Helena. The intruder seemed to beseech and pray, and to meet with expostulation and denial, with rough chidings for daring to penetrate so far, and assertions that what he desired was impossible. Nevertheless he returned laden, and from the clink of bottles in a basket, as well as from the appearance of his burden, I concluded it to be provision for the hungry. I had before been prepared to respect the fellow as a bandit, and had he but whispered the damsel, and sworn by his saints, I should still, despite my unaccountable loss, have done so. But the plunder of pasties and wine seemed so mean and unworthy of such a midnight visitor, that my first thought was to awake the house and seize the culprit. It was more urgent, and

less likely to produce mistake, to watch the fellow to his place of entrance. This was my final plan ; following him, I found him repass my chamber, and disappear through the western turret, in which, on examination, I found a door, a very palpable door and staircase communicating with the *basse cour* and lower apartments.

The part of accuser is not an agreeable one in most circumstances : to me it seemed best to warn the damsel of Helena, that her midnight acquaintance had been seen and watched, and to recommend, both to her and him, more prudence for the future. I thought not very seriously of the person or the adventure, until I perceived that my hint had reached the ears of Helena, nay, and affected her also. She directed at times a supplicatory look towards me, seemed to seek an opportunity of saying a word in confidence, that would banish my fears and distrust ; but Madam Milberghausen, her vigilance sharpened by the late rebuke of

the Count, acted the duenna as rigidly as if she had been on the bank of the Guadalquiver, not the Rhine.

That there was some mystery in the affair, and perhaps a delicate mystery, became evident; and either to fathom or disclose it, seemed impracticable or indelicate. There was but one alternative left, whereby to avoid unpleasantness, and this was to take my departure. This resolution I therefore announced, and fixed the time for its taking place, in despite of the dissuasions of the Count, and the more earnest, though more tacit entreaties of his daughter.

Still keeping my determination, one appeared to expostulate against it, whom I by no means expected. This was the midnight intruder himself, who came at a time when the moonlight somewhat displayed his person, and without stealth or secrecy approaching my couch, bade me neither fear nor wonder. The latter I could scarcely avoid, as I answered him.

He said he came to fling himself on an Englishman's generosity—that he was a student of the university of Heidelberg, suspected unjustly of having been an accomplice in the late assassination at Manheim—that he had been compelled to fly, and had sought shelter in these wilds.

“Why these wilds?”

He had known them and their recesses from youth 'up—the Prussian police too was less rigid and vigilant, than that of the smaller states—and—to throw off disguise—he knew, he loved Helena De Laach, whose humanity secretly provided food for him and his companions, although she refused to see or converse with him.

His dress, that of a student, bore witness to his story, as did his accent and manner more powerfully. His sombre gait, fashioned too like that of Hamlet on our stage, his diminutive cap, and rapier by his side, harmonized with a tragical and mysterious story.

“ But how is my tarrying or departing to affect your safety ?” said I.

“ That you may keep possession of this apartment, my only means of communication with the castle, till after the coming of M. Schrueber, who is daily expected, and who, if he arrive immediately upon your departure, will no doubt be installed here.”

“ And who is this Schrueber ?”

“ A brother commissioner of the Count’s in the task of fathoming our plans and punishing the initiated—a bigot moreover, a poltroon, and a tyrant. He is, for a particular reason, especially hostile to me, and the immediate cause of my being obliged to fly.”

“ May I ask Helena De Laach respecting the truth of this story ?”

“ What, Sir, do you doubt me ?”

“ As civilly and slightly as doubt may be entertained.”

“ Well—satisfy yourself.”

“ Your name ?”

“Shall be told only to those who fully trust me.”

He departed. Helena the next morning confirmed the truth of what I had heard. And so I consented to remain till after the arrival of Schrueber.

M. Schrueber was a vulgar, *bourgeois*-looking personage; the Count introduced him to me as a peer, but whether a peer of the little state of Hesse Darmstadt or that of Baden, I forget. Suffice that the name of peer, and the idea of nobility attached to Schrueber, endowed him with a character eminently ridiculous, as every step which he took to support his dignity, marred it. He was a politician of the right Austrian school—he had a horror of the words *representative* and *constitution*—firmly believed that the *jury* and the *liberty of the press* were inventions of the foul fiend, who peculiarly ruled heretic England—and confined his admiration exclusively to that *civil inquisition*, which French statesmen have dig-

nified with the name of *la haute police*. The youth of his country, and their known liberal principles, were objects of his fear and hatred; and as he too exercised the lucrative profession of political tale-bearing, the late assassination at Manheim filled his soul with horror and affright. His good qualities had recommended him to one or two of the little governments round, and as they were allowed to club together their choice, that they might jointly appoint one member to the *commission d'enquête* at Mayence, as they already clubbed to send a member to the Diet, M. Schrueber was pitched upon, to the great increase of his importance and satisfaction. The court which he paid to the Comte De Laach was most adulatory; knowing him to be a noble of influence in the Prussian councils, Schrueber deemed, that the best mode of shining and of pleasing would be to exaggerate his own love of despotism and horror of liberality; in this disgusting the personage whom he thought

to constitute a patron, and who, like many a minister of despotic power, yearned as much to liberality in heart, as he was compelled to frown upon and crush it in act.

“And, M. Schrueber,” asked the Count, “has any thing more been discovered relative to Sand’s affair? I think you charged yourself with the inquisition into the probability of the student of Jena having accomplices at Heidelberg?”

“For that matter, they are all accomplices,” said Schrueber, “Heidelberg, Jena, Halle, and Göttingen are united, the students affiliated in secret societies. And this last act emanated from one of their conclaves.”

The Count shook his head, in doubt of an accusation, which inculpated the rising generation of Germany in the crime of murder. “The youths’ was an inflammable mind, that caught the spark from the general agitation—no more—if otherwise proofs could not be wanting, and there are none.”

“A band of students from Heidelberg have withdrawn themselves on the first rumour of my inquest,” said Schrueber. “What should this look like?”

“I hope you did not commence with acts, M. Schrueber, with punishment previous to examination, such as imprisonment. Menaces even might have frightened away the innocent, or an insulting accusation thrown on the body might have disgusted and driven away the most honourable of them.”

“I was not able to chain up rumour, and on my arrival I found myself pressed by such a throng, and deafened by so many *pereats*, that in self-defence I was compelled to call for the aid of hussars, and arrest the most refractory.”

“Then perhaps it may be some of the most vivacious or vociferous amongst these rioters who have fled, without having been in the least privy to the crime of their comrade of Jena.

“Not at all likely, that they would have fled for such a trifle, or from such a man as I am known to be.”

“No, in verity,” quoth Madam Milberghausen.

Helena, I perceived, during this conversation was every moment on the point of bursting forth either in denial or in sarcasm, but dread of her father, of his severe dryness of manner and instantaneous penetration, checked her. She rejoiced, however, to see, and she had hitherto held a contrary opinion, that the Count was by no means so thorough a satellite of power, as to think the effervescence of juvenile spirits a crime meriting condemnation, inquisitions, and imprisonment. Helena held her peace, and wisely; for, left solely to encounter the questions and observation of the Count, M. Schrueber, in his narrowness, in his wish to please, and fear to exceed, and ignorance of the proper limit to stop at, en-

dured an half hour's torture more poignant, than an open denial of his assertion or confutation of his principles could have produced.

CHAPTER IV.

A HUNTING-PARTY was resolved on, which put Jost to the greatest possible bustle and glee. Hunting-spears and fusils, nets and dogs, were sought and collected. And all the company of the castle one fine morn sallied forth to the woods that surround the lake and clamber up the Veitsberg. All a stranger's curiosity was awake to observe in what manner they would proceed towards the capture of the game. None were mounted. The dogs were few ; but in lieu of these, a pack of bipeds, or peasants of the country, were collected to an immense number, and were soon in full cry with zeal and alacrity, ere sight had been ob-

tained of a single head of game. Having reached a spot nigh to the scene of sport, a noisy council of chase was held, in which Jost presided, the Count being more at home in the cabinet than in the field; and in which it was determined by strength of voice, sufficient indeed to excite suspicions of danger in the breasts of the least wary game, what was best, and what was to be done.

I was rather impatient myself, and longed for the stirring commencement. To my disappointment, I was led up a kind of forest alley or lane, and placed betwixt the trunks of two stout trees in ambuscade. The other sportsmen of the party were similarly posted along the same side of the wood. And thus left to our vigilance and cogitations, the peasants set forth to surround it on its most distant limit, and thence making an invasion upon it from all sides with dogs and shouts, to drive the game towards the marksmen.

The game were not surrounded on all sides,

nor was it a circle of men that hemmed them in, narrowing gradually, so as to close them round the sportsmen in the middle, as is, I believe, the custom in great German hunts. We were alone at one side, and the pack of country-folk at the other, so that having once run the gauntlet of our fire, the game escaped. And this appeared to me by far a more generous way of proceeding, than the more orthodox and murderous fashion.

Methought, my own ought to have been a disagreeable position for a bad shot and an inexperienced sportsman, as the shouts of the many voices and the baying of the dogs began of a sudden, and drowned by fits in the thick fastnesses of the wood, emerged and grew nearer, thus driving upon us the wild beasts of the forest; but as no one seemed to contemplate either unpleasantness or peril, of rare occurrence, I dismissed the idea. Soon a fox was seen to steal past, and other diminutive animals, not worth the sportsman's aim,

and who had the sagacity to *rat* and run in good time. Anon was heard the grunt of a wild boar, and his angry rush through the brake; and while the aim of the hunter was fixed upon the savage, a stag would bound past followed by a suite of unhorned and timid deer. Being nearest the wood, or rather in it, we, that is myself and Schrueber, who was posted next to me, were ordered to reserve our fire, and allow the first comers to pass on for the aim of those still more removed. To us, as strangers, was given the post of honour, as all the game must pass us. We over-obeyed our orders in letting too many escape unharmed. I discharged my piece at last several times, oftener without than with effect, while Schrueber, I perceived, hesitated to draw a trigger, most probably from nervousness. A boar passed down the line, wounded and limping; a maimed enemy gave Schrueber courage. He resolved to finish the unfortunate pig, and drag him in triumph as a proof of his prowess.

It was one of the last stragglers, for the game had almost passed altogether; and Schrueber, relying on this, sallied forth from his ambuscade into the alley in order to make more sure of his prey. He had scarcely raised his musquet, when, to his dismay, the grunt of another animal resounded behind him. The terrified Schrueber turned, and saw this new foe. 'Twas too late to regain his ambuscade, and he fled, pursuing one boar, and pursued by another, at the same time holding at arm's length from him, lest a brake or branch should touch the trigger, the musquet that he dreaded to use. As he fled in the line of the game too, there was a possibility of his receiving the fire of some brother hunter, who in his hurry and surprise might have done the peer the honour of taking him for a beast of prey.

Shots in stunning succession resounded in the mean time, and the shouts of the country people, having now nearly traversed and cleared the wood, with the barking of their

dogs, approached. It was then that a new and unexpected species of game made its appearance—a band of German students, if their garb was to be believed, to the number of about ten. Driven from their lair, with their joint-tenants of the forest, the fugitives were collected in a mass, in order to prosecute and make good their retreat. Perceiving me they passed, the foremost giving me a nod of recognition. I for the first time fully marked his countenance, which, though pale, was enthusiastic and noble, and tacitly applauded, though I could not but commiserate Helena's choice.

I followed them. The peasants were at hand, and the sport seemed to have concluded. I hurried to the road in order to catch a glimpse, if possible, of Schrueber's escape or disaster. The *bourgeois*-peer still fled, the animal still pursued—some shots were fired, as he passed, at the latter, but more to the discomfiture of Schrueber, who was ready to

sink with terror. The sportsmen in ambuscade seemed to have enjoyed the dismay and danger of the poltroon, for none stepped forth to his aid. The Count alone took pity on his visiter, and stepped forth to intercept the boar, that seemed to pursue with rage and alacrity the prey that had started up before him. The Count fired, wounded, but did not kill the animal, who thereupon turned his rage and grinning tusks at the old noble. Another shot had still less effect. The beast closed on the Comte De Laach, drove his tusks into his leg, overthrew him—and a general shout and shriek arose from his terrified friends and too distant attendants. The tusks of the enraged boar would in an instant have been in the stomach of the foe he had overturned; but that at the moment the foremost student, who had far outstripped his comrades with incredible speed, arrived, and seasonably plunged his knife or dagger into the brute's neck. Even then he did not die without struggle,

overthrowing the student, and rolling with him, till the assistants came up to extricate him. The Count too was uplifted, and whilst some hasty bandages were applied to a wound, that was trivial, except when the years of the sufferer were considered, the parties gazed in silence and astonishment at each other.

“Who is this young gentleman,” asked the Count, “to whom I am indebted for preservation?”

The question was repeated to the still silent youth by the by-standers, and he answered, “It matters excessively little.”

“On the contrary, my young Herr,” cried Schrueber, who had mustered courage on his deliverance, and rejoined the crowd, “it matters much. We must know on whom we are to heap our thanks and inexhaustible gratitude for the precious life he has saved.”

“Bestow them on those who value the false fawnings of the coward and the knave.”

Schrueber drew back as from another wild

boar, eying the youth at the same time more attentively than he had hitherto done. And the incongruity of a student being of a sudden found in the depths of a Rhenish forest struck him. The costume too was perfect, that of the most thorough Brusch, and Bonn as yet contained none such.

“ You are from Heidelberg, young master ?” said Schrueber.

“ From Bröl, Sir, if you seek to know my place of birth and residence.”

“ Your parents ?” asked the Count.

“ Sleep by the Rhine’s bank. They are no more. My uncle is known by the name of Friar Guy, an ancient Benedictine of yon Convent, Sir ; may you live well.”

This last expression was tantamount to bidding adieu to the company, and accordingly after uttering it, the speaker turned to withdraw, and rejoin his comrades, who lurked at some distance from the scene.

But both the Count and Schrueber made

signs to detain him, and the hunting party intercepted a retreat.

“You would make me prisoner then, Count De Laach, for interfering betwixt you and the boar?”

“No prisoner, young man. The gratitude which I owe you, impels me to preserve you from that fate. And my friend, M. Schrueber, seems by his looks to entertain ideas respecting you, that you and I together will, perhaps, be able to clear up. His proceedings might be precipitate and summary. Let me entreat you to favour me with your company to the castle?”

“If you owe me gratitude, Comte De Laach,” replied the youth, “let it be evinced in leaving my path free.”

“Respect the advice of age,” said the Count. “Bear me to the castle. This young man will follow. And let some one overtake his comrades, and persuade them to follow.”

The first part of his commands were obeyed.

The latter were found somewhat impracticable, as the domestics in approaching the little band, found the students with rapiers drawn to oppose them. They would hear nothing, till they were assured that their comrade was at liberty, and that he went of free will to the castle of the Comte de Laach. Learning this from his own mouth, they withdrew to their fastnesses, as before, affecting to be one of those parties, who wander for the purpose of studying botany and geology through the mountains.

Fritz, for so his comrades named the youth, accompanied the wounded Count and his followers to the castle, wearing certainly an air of uneasiness and agitation, that confirmed apart the evidently evil opinion entertained of him by Schrueber. That personage remained behind, occupied in his own cogitations, and in the mean time the rest of the party reached the castle.

Helena was naturally in distraction on be-

holding her father so returned, yet her change of colour and surprise was not more marked than when she beheld the student making one of his followers. The good Madam Milberghausen was equally petrified by both causes, and the Count could not avoid noticing that the young student, however a stranger to him, was not one to either his daughter or her female guardian.

The wounded lord of the castle was conveyed to his chamber, and then the day's sport closed, throwing a considerable gloom upon the spirits of the party.

CHAPTER V.

FRITZ and I became friends. He was often called to the chamber of the Count; and as we were all in the habit of entering there, in order to enliven the dulness of confinement, I was witness to one of the conversations that took place betwixt the young student and the old noble.

“ I hope you have kept your promise, my young friend,” said the Count, “ in asking pardon of the Baron Schrueber for the insults you so gratuitously offered him.”

“ My promise was but to try to do so,” replied Fritz; “ I did endeavour. But ’twas

impossible. I could not bring my tongue to it."

"Have you considered the consequences of this stubborn pride? If you will not stoop to aid yourself, how is it to be expected that others will?"

"Nor expected, nor wished—I will abide my fate or rather shun it. For which reason, Count, I again ask your permission to depart."

"Tut, boy, what can you fear beneath my roof—But tell me now honestly, Fritz Lufer, why did you quit Heidelberg?"

"To avoid the dungeon that Schrueber threatened me and my comrades with, was one reason."

"Do you approve of the act of Sand?"

"I do with my whole soul."

"Rash boy, if you should ever make me such answer as president of the commission of inquest, your doom is sealed. Immutable imprisonment will be your condemnation."

"Do not argue so. Or you persuade me to

earn that fate, by what ye jurisconsults would call a *crime* worthy of it."

The Count frowned sadly. "If you have been an accomplice in the crime of Sand, as Schrueber believes, and as your words render credible, you have done enough. And then indeed we may part."

"I knew nought of it; I first heard, and then admired."

"Is it not inconceivable," said the Count, addressing me, "that such principles should be taught, held, and vaunted."

"They are the children of despotism," said Fritz. "One evil can be combated by another. And such a permanent crime may be well bartered for a passing one."

"That is, tyranny for assassination."

"The same."

"What jesuitical sophist taught thee this?"

"My country's wrongs, my own reason."

"It is folly to argue with a madman. Doth

your enthusiasm urge you to imitate the Roman patriots?"

"It doth," said Fritz proudly.

"Then remember Fabricius scorned to do that which you applaud, and his country has recorded it to his praise."

"So have they recorded and praised the daring of Mutius on a contrary principle."

"Ah! their moral code was somewhat lax. But we are Christians," said the Count. "At least, whether we believe or not, we walk in the light of Christianity, and feel the truth and divinity of its precepts, even when we ascribe the discovery to our own sagacity. You know not what you abet, what you applaud,—did you ever see blood?"

"Often," replied the youth with a smile.

"From your finger, or the scratch of a rapier? But was it the life's blood, wrung from the heart even of the veriest wretch, by murder? Go, I cannot believe that you are imbued with the sanguinary paradox you uphold.

I am bound at least by gratitude as well as humanity to endeavour to recover you from it. Chance or providence may aid me."

I had retired to a lattice, and was gazing forth from it upon the lake and the lovely landscape that surrounded it.

"Another word," continued the Count; "where knew you my daughter, Helena?"

"At Manheim. From Heidelberg thither is a frequent excursion of the students. I met her in society."

"Never in secret."

"Never," and the youth flushed.

"Who introduced you to her, or what circumstances?"

"Chance," and he was still more confused.

"You are frank, and I dare say honourable—you must make me a promise on this point. Let me not have the air to dictate it."

"Then if you allow me freely to converse and cultivate friendship with Helena De Laach,

never, and you may superadd what imprecation you deem most secure, never, I promise, by the honour of a German and a true student, to wed Helena De Laach, without your permission—”

“Sacred thunder,” cried the Count, “what modesty !”

“Nor approach her ear with words that thither tend,” continued the youth undisturbed.

“’Tis well, Sir,” observed the Count proudly, “I am satisfied.”

I found Fritz soon after, about to leave the castle. I asked him was it for any time, and he replied, that it was merely on a visit to his comrades ; and perhaps his uncle, Friar Guy. I said, my steps were wood-ward, and he asked me to accompany him.

As we walked round the brink of the lake, and gazed into its pellucid waters, my companion was pensive. He seemed occupied with some thought, which acquainted as I was with a youth’s inmost secret, the state and object

of his affections, he still did not wish to communicate.

“You are anxious to see a gang of wild Bruschers,” said he, “and you shall. What an amiable, generous, noble old man !” continued he, abruptly turning his thoughts from his rude comrades to the mild and prudent friend, whose counsel still sounded in his ear. “How different I deemed him—the proud aristocrat—and can the minions of tyranny be like him, humane, considerate, reasonable, liberal—impossible—yet he is so—this ’tis to take one’s ideas of the world from the hatreds and prejudices of the cloister or the college !”

“Why even there should an unjust opinion have been formed of the Comte De Laach ?”

“Why—he has been sent here chief inquisitor,—to lend his ear to information,—to shut us up in dungeons, and force confessions from us,—to uproot our societies, our bonds, and decimate the youth, that are the hope of Germany.”

“Nay—you exaggerate.”

“It is his duty, his office—he has accepted it—he is paid for it. A dozen of us had sworn his death.”

“You are imprudent to make me a confidant of meditated murder. There——”

“Fear not. Thou hast seen that in the hour of opportunity, this hand was raised to save, not to destroy.”

“The having meditated it, but for an instant, is crime enough.”

“Thou art a canting Philistine,” said the student. “Have dreams never tempted you? Nor the enemy of mankind, in a solitary hour, o’ershadowed you with his wing? Have you never felt the first inchoate thought of crime—of a selfish, or luxurious one, if not of the self-devoting and the noble? Go—I took you for an open-souled man.”

I stood, more astonished than hurt. I scarcely understood what I had heard. He hurried on a few paces and returned. “Come,”

said he, "your reproof was right. Providence has saved me from a great crime."

"I cannot understand you. Methought that you were the lover of Helena De Laach. How then in return meditate evil against her parent?"

"By treading private affection under the feet of public duty."

"I will regain the castle," said I.

"You shall not—shall not leave me to my passion, my remorse. I have to meet friends, fiends like myself, yet no, fools, and that is all—school boys on Roman stilts. Come with me—I exaggerate—I play the fool—and am not what I still would seem."

There was a strange mixture of the noble and the criminal about the youth.—His belief, or rather his past belief, in the heroism of crime wrought for great ends, such as he no doubt esteemed public liberty—then the frank, self-accusing passion in which his remorse confessed itself—and the fondness and paradox

with which at intervals he clung to his old ideas—formed a compound of character, that struck me as now fit for Bedlam, at one time for the executioner, and at another for the hero's niche and fame. I was interested, though shocked; and commiseration stepped in to combat and succeed my abhorrence.

We walked a mile or two rapidly in silence, and gained at length a glen, retired, of fearful and curious aspect. It had once been wooded; an earthquake, or some such convulsion incident to these regions, had torn up the trees, scarified its sides, leaving huge fissures and bald spots white and sulphuric; while gray lava-blocks cumbered the bottom, which seemed in winter to be the bed of a stream. Now, however, and for some months it seemed to have been dry, for the sod was firm and green. Some straggling forest trees raised themselves here and there; none majestic, being but the second shoot or growth of decayed and shattered stems. In the sides

of the ravine huge roots of the once lordly timber were bared, and presented fantastically curved and knotted arches. Betwixt some these intervals were hollowed, and proved the entrance to caverns, which had been excavated for cement-stones, much of which was of old, and is still, exported from these regions to other countries. The workmen, however, had long since exhausted or deserted this valley, and for the present we found that one of the caverns had been taken possession of by the comrades of Fritz.

It was too hot, and too short a time past noon, for idlers at least to have been sauntering; and we heard the voices of the collected band bursting in unison from the cavern mouth, as we approached it, singing Schiller's well-known song in the Robbers :

Ein freyes leben fuehren wir,
Ein leben voller wonne,
Der wald ist unser Nachtquartier,
Bey sturm und wind hantieren wir,
Der mond ist unsre Sonne, &c.

A roving, jovial life lead we,
A life right full of pleasure ;
Our home is 'neath the wild wood tree,
By storm and night our trade ply we,
The moon of our day 's the measure, &c.

“ Fritz, my knave, friend, captain, brother,” were the different salutations that my companion received from his different comrades. They all embraced him, questioned him, expressed their gladness and his welcome by many extravagant shouts, gambols, and cant expressions ; carrying on a conversation with him in the latter occult tongue, that baffled all my powers of comprehension. It of course concerned me ; and, after a time, I was made the object of welcome too.

What is a German welcome, however, without feasting ? The repast of the students was spread forth, nor scanty nor Spartan ; and I was not so very much surprised, as without previous observation I might have been, to recognise upon the floor of the cave several remnants of pasties and dishes, that had

adorned the yesterday's dinner of the castle table. The pocket-knives and fingers of the company made speedy work with the Count's viands; and conversation languished, or else was limited to ejaculations, until the company, wiping their knives upon the remnants of their black bread, produced, and commenced pouring libations from bladders full of Rhenish. The vessel or its name are neither of them elegant—however 'tis classic, being the decanter used by Homer's heroes; although Mr. Pope could no more permit the word into his couplets, than a French poet dare think of admitting that of *pistolet* into his.

The drinking glasses were peculiarly Rhenish—of coarse gray glass, double, or two united by a stem, one serving as a stand to the other, and stamped as due measure by the eagle of Prussia or the rampant lion of Hesse.

“ Here is welcome to you, Fritz, and joy to

your delivery from the hands of the Philistines," pledged the youths around to their restored comrade.

"I tell you again," said Fritz, "there are none but true Germans on this side the Rhine."

"Mongrel dogs, and not to be trusted, neither Saxon nor Gaul, I say."

"Would you have lurked so safely in the depths of the Black Forest, as you have lain secret here?"

"How long will that last? The Count President must have his eye upon us since that cursed hunting match betrayed our haunt. And Schrueber's a sheep of the very Metternich brand. 'Twas luck sent him hither. The President De Laach, and he, are the head and neck of the Inquisition—let's do what we came for—fill Germany with our name—and then perish or disperse."

It was only from after information I learned, that this was the sum of the proposal, for

'twas spoken in a dialect or an accent beyond my comprehension.

“None touches De Laach whilst I have a rapier,” cried Fritz, “nor Schrueber either for that matter—we will not stain ourselves in his base blood.”

“One’s blood is too base—t’other’s too noble—how squeamish the air of yon castle has rendered Fritz. The blow was in his hands when he o’ermastered the boar, and he had not the courage to strike—he has betrayed the cause.”

“A false knave and a traitor saith so,” cried Fritz, forgetting in his rage the more polite formulæ which alone a student should make use of in insult. Swords were of course instantly out, and save one, who seemed the youngest of the band, all seemed to have taken a view of the question unfavourable to Fritz. He had deserted their principles, their peculiar bond of union.

He had so. And before Fritz went forth to

decide the quarrel, he informed them of his determination, in an harangue of eloquence and heat. He professed to be still as much attached to German freedom as the most patriotic ; but that he had been convinced that that cause, or any other the most sacred, must suffer more than it would be benefited by crime. At any rate, that the devoting soul and body in such an act as was proposed, demanded a mightier, a solitary victim, whose power and existence alone stood betwixt millions and their rights. If Napoleon lived, and the student of Schoenbrunn be adduced as a noble victim of self-devotion. But Sand's was a useless crime.

I cannot follow or set down the false arguments of his enthusiasm, which sought in vain to mark as just and noble, as well as expedient, the middle path betwixt right and wrong. The insulted student called for satisfaction, and Fritz crossed rapiers with him at the mouth of the cavern. There was not one

dissuading voice. I was a mere cipher, ignorant even of the high and fierce sounds poured forth and imprecated round me. They drove in mortal combat at each other's breasts. But after a little it became evident, that the skill of both was so great, as to render any fatal consequence unlikely. The antagonist of Fritz at length received a wound, and not a trifling, though at the same time not a dangerous one. The circumstance excited neither commiseration nor anxiety—it was of too frequent occurrence. And Fritz, recommending his friends to remove to a more distant place of refuge, if they could not return safely to Heidelberg, took, with me, his course across the hill.

“Chance decides every thing,” said he, as we surmounted the hill; “I should never have worked myself up to the resolution to forswear my false ideas, and deny them before my comrades, but that my blood was stirred to it by that fool's taunt.”

“Let us be content with the virtue of a resolution, without analyzing too nicely its motive ; ’tis what few would bear.”

“And if you knew all the motives in this case, you would give my virtue still less credit.”

“A nearer view of the charms and worth of Helena have wrought upon you.”

Fritz sighed and smiled. “There is another dream of enthusiasm from which I am awakened. Fortune has dispersed all my visions at once—well—she will repay me—I am her child—and must be thankful.

We were about to descend the other side of the ridge we had surmounted, when the figure of Friar Guy advanced towards us. When I pointed out his uncle to Fritz, the youth, at that moment in no patient mood, turned his eye upon me and then upon his relative, with a haughtier and more dissatisfied air than became his duty towards the senior. In short, the fiery student and patriot blushed, me-

thought, at claiming no higher kin nor stock, than that of an humble friar.

“Well met—we sought you,” said Fritz.

“And I have been watching your motions, boy. You have followed my counsel in breaking with that band of unholy youths?”

“It has so happened, that I have.”

“And for the rest of my bidding—”

“Bidding!”

“Ay, bidding, mine haughty son—look you, that the favour of the Count of yon castle hath not turned your head, or his daughter’s glance set you too high. You seem to scorn my garb—’tis old, ’tis true—but if it is thread-bare, boy, ’t has been with carrying thee an infant in its folds.”

There was something about the friar that I did not at all like, something sinister in the countenance, selfish in demeanour, and of that falsity calculated to blind the person it addresses, but which always lies open to a third person or spectator. This feeling could alone

have prompted me to give utterance to the unseasonable remark, which rose to my tongue, that—"These were suspicious acts of tenderness in a gowned friar."

The monk's brow kindled to a crimson hue—the word surpassed his vow of patience—and Fritz looked as if with a rapier-drawing face.

"Throw no arrows in the dark, Sir," said Fritz, "the wit, if there be any, is not worth the wound it may chance to give.—You mistake me, uncle. I am heated with a brawl I fell into below, and you mistake the not yet subsided flush and flurry, which it occasioned, for pride. You know, I am obedient—that I must be so," and the words were spoken with peculiar expression, bordering perhaps on irony.

"You had best in truth."

"Leave threats implied, good uncle. My temper will not brook them spoken."

"And had you not best, I repeat," continued Friar Guy, but in a softened tone,

“shew yourself a youth amenable to the wisdom of age. But, have you spoken to the Count touching our Convent, or made the promise——”

“So far from arriving at stipulation, I have not yet been able to command his attention to the subject. I touched upon it once or twice, and he thought that I alluded to Sand’s affair, and plunged the conversation into it—another time he cut me short by the declaration, that he had utterly forgotten every event of the last century, and for that matter so had Europe too.”

“The wily old diplomatist.”

“Therefore I come to warn you, that you must speak yourself. He baffles me, and, strange to say, awes me by his grave demeanour.”

“’Tis natural. But is he really kind?”

“I have every reason to feel that he is warmly so.”

“Well, we will see. But why, think you, I

sent to speak with you? 'Twas on a matter more urgent than this. You should have come alone."

"Speak—I will answer for the stranger."

"And I will trust him. You know the land too well, Fritz, not to know, that every house contains a spy."

"That do I, yet without alway attending to the said truth."

"In every house there is one—that take for granted—to find who is the person, is the difficulty."

We ran over the list of all the inmates of the Castle, guests as well as domestics. All possibly might act the part intimated. None were likely.

"There is one you have not yet mentioned."

"Who? we have thought of all, ah, save indeed Jost, the Count's confidential valet."

"Now who is the personage in the household most worth being gained over as an emissary?"

“He, doubtless, if the thing were possible.”

“Then he is the man—beware Jost, the confidential valet. Trust those who are out of the world for knowing what passes in it.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE Count's confinement left the company of the castle very much to their machinations and amusement. Many went and came. Fritz seemed to make use of the opportunity to knit his intimacy with Helena, taking advantage of the Count's permission thereto with a liberty that boded a flagrant breach of his solemn promise. Madam Milberghausen, against whose frowns and prohibition the permission of the Count was pleaded, and who expostulated with the old noble in vain, seemed to take measures with Schrueber either for vengeance or for her own satisfaction. Indeed it began to be whispered that the new Baron was

anxious to have his title reflected in the style and person of a helpmate, and that for this reason he had cast the eyes of a suitor upon Mrs. Milberghausen. The story however was but one. The good lady was merely anxious to preserve her neice from a low alliance, and in thus communicating with Schrueber, she found that the Baron looked with an equally hostile eye upon the student, from other causes.

Secure in the friendship of the Count, and in the good opinions of the latter, confirmed by what he had heard of Fritz's late conduct and abjuration of his old principles and associates, the student seemed to defy the enmity of the seniors. His time and converse were devoted to Helena, who on her part seemed to favour him without reserve. They did not even scruple to take together moonlight walks upon the battlements. And with my lattice open, after having retired to rest, I could not avoid hearing both their steps and communings.

"It is the loveliest scene in nature," said Helena, gazing no doubt, as I myself was, on the reflection of Heaven, with all its stars and its bright moon, in the still lake. The far brink cast a dark shade round, marking more strongly the pellucid mirror, in which at times the objects were stirred gently by a stray breath, waving each fixed point of light into a streak. The reflex of a falling star too shot through the depths at intervals. The overhanging woods were all as still—the distant convent was in shade, with merely its tiled ridge, its chimneys, and its turrets, for it too was castellated in part, tipped with the silvery ray. And of the bright haze which extended itself far over dim and lovely scenery to the horizon, the imagination might form almost what scene it would, for the fairy realm lent itself to all.

"It is a native place worth loving."

"A possession worth struggling for."

"What says Guy?"

“He insists on the restoration of the Convent. It is in vain to urge to him the impracticability of his scheme. The old man’s heart is set upon it.”

What obstinate folly—in the present unbelieving day, when even his gown is a mockery—and in the states of a Lutheran Prince. Surely he will defer it.

“He says, with truth, that he is too old. That he must see the wish of his heart fulfilled, or will allow ours to remain unaccomplished.”

“Is that in his power?”

“In great part.”

“We must then entreat my father.”

“Will he listen? For as to making, or venturing to hint at the stipulation which the friar proposes, it would be impossible—the quick sense of the old statesman would catch at once what was implied, would esteem the whole to be an interested plot, in which he was merely to be deceived for the benefit of

others, and would turn his back both on it, and on me perhaps, who uttered it."

"Why not confess all to my father, and let him deal, as best he must know the means, with the Friar."

"My good uncle might disappear from the country altogether in that case—he must too easily foresee that circumstance, not to be prepared to baffle it—besides my sworn promise to him—that I must not infringe."

"And your promise to my father, Fritz."

There was a pause, during which the student passed his arm round Helena's neck, by way of reply.

"I have received this very evening a letter, a joint letter from my fellow-students and comrades, craving reconciliation, vowing they have wronged me, and must see me once again—"

"Remember, Fritz."

"Nay, Helena, see me—and that they will still linger near to watch my safety. Were there ever such preposterous fools?"

“In this case you must see them indeed, and persuade them to begone. Something will be laid to their charge, and you will be implicated.”

“They assert, that Schrueber dispatched a courier from Bröl to Mayence.”

“Nothing more likely. But what can be feared in my father’s castle.”

“I at least fear nothing.”

“And I, every breath.”

“Well, a little anxiety becomes you, as none doth me. I will watch the Baron. You think the friar’s suspicions of Jost are unjust?”

“Am certain, my father has trusted him from boyhood. But we must part, Fritz—the night advances, and Milberghausen will find some pretext to intrude upon my chamber.”

“Good night, then, dear Helena.”

It was the afternoon of the following day, when I prepared to take one of my accus-

tomed strolls. I left the castle with that intent, and sauntered round to the verge of the lake. I heard my name called suddenly, and looking round, saw Fritz, beckoning to me from the Basse Cour. I obeyed his summons.

“Now, once more for the *escalier derobé*,” said he. And he ascended lightly a dark and hidden staircase, up which I followed, imitating his caution. After some winding and fatigue, we arrived at the turret-cabinet, into which the student stole. He immediately bid me look through the chink of the half-open door. And there I beheld Master Jost, with the *escrutoire*, where I had thrown some loose papers, open before him, and also, despite of Bramah, my portmanteau in a similar condition. Papers, however, seemed to be the sole object of his search. And as he replaced more than he took, I perceived, it was for the purposes of *espionnage*, not robbery, that he gave himself all this trouble. Fritz now

made me signs to descend, and thus after having ocular demonstration of Jost's treason to his master's guests at least, if not to his master, we left him undisturbed to his researches.

“ Shall we not go to the Count instantly ? ” said I.

“ Nay, nay—that would be starting the game, before stretching the net. Join me here in the evening. Master Jost has his errand to Bröl. I have discovered his den, and by St. Benedict, we will rifle it.”

I found Fritz at the appointed hour. Jost he had watched on his errand towards the Rhine. The student had provided the means of access to Jost's cabinet, which, upon first entering it, seemed more to belong to a secretary than to a *valet de chambre*. All the rascal's security seemed to have been founded on the utter improbability of his being suspected, for no pains whatever were taken to secrete the objects of his spoil and treason. Some

papers lay half-copied—Extracts and summaries of others had been deemed sufficient. Amongst other scraps I perceived part of a diary, which I myself was in the habit of keeping; and certainly the copying or mis-copying of it made a strange figure. I could not well make it out—but my simple remarks on German characters, German scenery, and German cookery, looked most treasonable in the strokes of Jost's penmanship. I seized it as a proof; Fritz said, it was not sufficient—something more conclusive was necessary—something treasonable against the Count's self. Such I despaired of finding, not believing that the spy could have been so consummate a rascal.

Fritz prosecuted his search, anxious, as his mutterings avowed, to discover if any letter or paper of Helena's had fallen into the fellow's power. On this point he seemed most interested. But none appeared. In the midst of a search, of which I began to be weary, my

hands lit upon a roll of manuscript, differing in appearance, in the hand-writing, and in the care with which it was enveloped, from the rest. I opened it. It seemed a sort of narrative. What could have brought such there? I shewed it to Fritz, who looked over it.

“Psha!” said he, “the *brouillon* of some cursed romance or tale-writer, on whose acquaintance the Count happened to light.”

If the student, whilst he uttered this, had looked in my countenance, he would have seen strange signs of guilt and wonder. It made me look again at the manuscript, in some doubt if I were not to find it an *Historiette*—rather a difficult matter, even for Jost’s ingenuity, as the post conveys these very loose sheets of mine as soon as scribbled. Foregad, however, it was very like one. Fritz cast his sharp eye over it again. “The *Comte de L—*, the *Comte de L—*,” read he, and repeated—“What’s this? where did you

find it? the copy, if there be one, may inform us."

Copy there was none, save a scrap, that seemed to have belonged to such.

"This will do," said Fritz, as he observed the paper endorsed with an observation, "The Count's Memoir to the year ninety-five, the rest either never written, or not to be obtained."

"'Tis what we seek for," cried the student, "a paper from the Count's own desk. Let us see. I have a letter of his. Let us compare them. It is, it is the Comte De Laach's own hand-writing. This memoir is his—evidently stolen by Jost, the copy dispatched by him to his employers.—Come, this *is* proof. And we have rummaged enough. This has been laid by. Place the rest, as they were left, not to awaken suspicion for a day or two. The Count must see his memoir, and know where it was obtained."

Satisfied with our prize, we both retreated.

Fritz acceded to my request, to grant me the possession and perusal of the few papers for that night. The brief memoir, which it had amused the Comte De Laach to draw up of his own early adventures, in the third person however, I present, as I read it, to my readers.

THE MEMOIR
OF THE
COMTE DE LAACH.

THE people of the three Ecclesiastical Electorates had for some time enjoyed profound tranquillity. Whilst the insurrection of the colonies of England kept the west of Europe in agitation, and the partition of Poland threatened to have the same effect on the east, the little German states, that had hitherto alway tasted of the earliest fruits of war, looked on for the first time unconcernedly at the quarrels of others. The Comte De L— was then very young, and instead of being sensible to the blessings of peace, he upbraided his stars

for having ushered him into life at so dull an epoch. The Count wished to travel; but his relative and sovereign, the Elector of Treves, expressly forbade him to quit his court, saying that it behoved not the subjects of the church to wander or war.

The old prelate had truth in asserting, that in his territory there was all that might content a reasonable man. It is, or was, throughout its whole extent, certainly the most picturesque and beautiful little realm in Europe. With the banks of the Rhine, with those of the Moselle, what region will compare? All it wanted even then to complete its charm, was the liberty of leaving it for a short space.

The Electorate was not without other attractions. The court resided chiefly at Coblenz. Although it was against discipline and rule for female charms to display themselves within its precincts, the daughters of the Rhine were too lovely not to overcome mo-

nastic etiquette; and with their unholy intrusion, joined with the easy, benignant, and joyous character of the reigning priesthood, Europe could not boast a happier court.

The youthful heart refuses to lie fallow. If unsown with the serious seeds of business or at least of busy amusement, love will spring up. It did so in the breast of the Comte De L—, who, had he been permitted to digress a time into the world, visit the courts of Europe, and its distinguished men, would have occupied his young head with more useful and delightful experience, after which he might have recurred in riper age to the solace of manly and mature affection. Fate and the Elector ordered it otherwise, and filled his young days with bitterness.

At the feet of Isabella—the Count declared his passion; and that either her heart, or vanity was gladdened by the conquest of a lover, was evident in her guileless, though confused joy.

'Twas at the period when troubles thickened in France, threatening the nobility and the throne. Rumour upon rumour came. Some amongst the Trevites were secretly pleased, some alarmed, the greater part careless. Our sage elector saw clearly the commencement of the war against altar and throne ; and strong in his expression of commiseration for the French monarch, and indignation against his oppressors, those who meditated flight, looked toward his territory as a point of rallyment. The emigration began. It was a torrent, and in a short month, our little town of Coblenz was filled with fugitive nobles, families, prelates, and princes. Flight was the mode—and fashionable example so lorded over the better classes in France, that persons of *ton* were afraid to linger behind, lest they should lose their *caste*. The duty to their sovereign that bade them rally round him, that to their country, which bade them adhere to it and preserve it, were silenced by the edicts of the ruling

petits maitres, who declared emigration to be *devoir à la mode*. And the greater part of the nobility of France, nowise forced to the step, sacrificed their rank and possessions, and embraced voluntary exile, rather than be thought singular in remaining behind.

Amongst the most distinguished of the emigrants was the Prince De R——. His was truly an escape, since he was nominally proscribed. After passing the utmost peril he arrived upon our frontiers, bringing with him his only sister to swell the court of Treves, which soon became the most splendid, most magnificent, and most needy in the world. For the fugitives had left all property in the hands of their enemies, or else had sold their possessions for sums so trifling, that it lasted their prodigality but for a brief space.

The Comte De L——became attached to the Prince De R——. Both were young, both were ardent. The French noble had the advantage over his new Rhenish friend

in his worldly knowledge, his habitual converse with the court and society of Paris, which was a world in itself. He was gay, had wit, address, the power of mockery, the talent of raillery, to perfection, and the Count could not preserve his independence sufficiently to prevent him from taking the Prince as a model, and from allowing to him, both in public and private, the *pas* over him, which perhaps the Frenchman merited. The simplicity, the confidence of character, which were the result of a retired life, betrayed the Comte De L—— into this weakness. And when mortification had taught him to perceive it, and pride prompted him to correct it, the Count found it was too late. Like all other kinds of dominion, the once allowed holds good its place against the strongest endeavours to shake it off. And short of a downright quarrel, in which resentment would infallibly have assumed the appearance of petulance, the true equality of friendly inter-

course became impossible to be restored betwixt the friends.

In short, they became rivals. Isabella's beauty, perhaps her rank and wealth, attracted the homage of the Prince. And perhaps, for the Count's alienation from him became evident, while some of his steps piqued the Prince, the latter seized the opportunity to supersede a rival in a lady's heart. Isabella, weak girl, could not but prefer the accomplished courtier and man of the world to the rustic attendant on a prelate, who reigned in a corner; and her smile was suddenly withdrawn from the Comte De L——, her ancient and almost received lover.

Coblentz became in the meantime the scene of more important intrigues, than those of individual friends or rivals. It was the focus of counter-revolution. The French Princes took up their residence there, the monarchs of Europe sent their agents and emissaries. The anarchists in France were to be put down;

and as the hopes of the emigrés became more ardent and more founded, their credit revived, and funds were again forthcoming to support magnificence and fashion.

The Prince De R—— espoused Isabella——. The Comte was piqued and envious more than despairing; a state of feeling, that informed him that his affection had been one of those, which chance kindles prematurely, when the young breast is too impatient to tarry cool for its true passion.

Against her the Comte De L—— felt no resentment. Every feeling of that kind was cherished against the stranger, the intruder, the false friend, the successful rival. To gratify this resentment in the only honourable way, the Comte De L—— did every thing that was possible, but found his purposes always baffled. This was not owing to the unwillingness of the Prince, at least not to any want of courage on his part, for the emigré was as chevalresque in courage as in manner.

Chance or some unseen hand so contrived, that at full a score of times and places of rendezvous fixed for the decision of the quarrel, one or other either never found themselves, or if in despite of obstacles they did meet, their purpose was marred by the sudden appearance and interference, now of the Elector, now of the Comte D'Artois, of some ladies of the court or emigration, or of the good Police of Treves, which was never vigilant, except on this occasion, before or since.

It perplexed both, but the Comte De L—— especially, to discover who could be so interested in their fates:—a man certainly it could not be, for his care of ever so dear a friend could not extend to thus sedulously guarding him from meeting a foe in the fair field of duel.

The Bourbon princes then inhabited the chateau of Schönbornlust, at a short distance from Coblenz. And they were surrounded certainly with a strange and motley court, as full of intrigue, as if an empire's revenue

and patronage passed through its hands, and not abating one jot of the pride and etiquette, which is considered necessary for one of the first courts of Europe. Contrasted with this was its poverty and daily expedients to borrow sufficient for the food of the household. To this indeed our Rhenish nobles with generous confidence contributed—the chief of them, the Prince of Neuwied, for example, still remain creditors to a great amount, to the newly-restored house of Bourbon. If funds were conveyed to them from Paris, it was always with melancholy feelings that the emigré princes thus found themselves relieved, for republican vigilance soon doomed the generous remitters to the guillotine. Such was the fate of the venerable Magon De La Ballue, who, for having remitted a sum to Coblenz at this epoch, perished with all his family of children, grand-children, and great-grand-children, wives, daughters, and infants, filling with his own offspring one of

those fatal waggons that conducted a herd of victims to the guillotine.

Many of the powers of Europe leagued with the fugitive princes. The armies of Austria marched to the Rhine, and Condé equipped his little army of emigrés. The Rhenish nobles were as ready to hazard their persons, as to exhaust their treasures, in the service of royalty. The Comte De L—— himself raised a band of followers, which called itself a regiment; and full of ardour and hope, he alternately took the field, and repaired to the court of Schönbornlust to consult respecting plans of campaigning: although this was often the excuse for the enjoyment of its gay society, at times a pretext for terminating his quarrel with the Prince De R——.

It was with the latter view that he repaired thither on a certain day. The little exile court was elated with having received the overtures of one of the Republican generals, who promised to betray his party. Much as

they built upon it however, and with reason, since it was veritably a plank of safety to their shipwrecked cause, the aristocratic council long hesitated ere they could bring themselves to promise rank or honours towards one elevated from the ranks of the people. They even threw a damp upon the zeal of the renegade, and compromised the success of his treason, by refusing him the title of General, as not derived from competent authority. So much does high and exclusive breeding narrow the intellects of men, and thus is the pride of birth and place made to entail its own punishment, by rendering its heritors incapacitated from defending their own privileges.

The Comte D'Artois in secret did the Comte De L—— the honour to communicate to him these tidings, and expressed his hopes of a speedy termination of the misfortunes of France.

“ But you, Count,” concluded he, “ have

but half a soul in our success. Your thoughts are meditating vengeance upon one of our best supporters, and yet you call yourself our friend." In vain did the Comte De L—— reply in excuse. "You must give up your enmity," continued the Bourbon Prince, "the Princesse De R—— is happy—and you should turn your affections elsewhere. The Prince bears you no enmity, I can answer—nay, speaks with warmth of your former friendship, and regret for its irremediable cause. May I place my command upon you, to forget this silly quarrel, and to be friends.—Besides you see, ye cannot meet to terminate it hostilely—Fate has determined that you shall not."

"If your Highness would inform me, what or *who* that fate may be," replied the Comte De L——, "it would at once satisfy my curiosity, and much allay my resentment."

"Indeed! Then, I could inform you, under promise—"

“I will be secret.”

“It is a lady.”

“I guessed as much. But who can be so interested in my fate, the spurned of one of my own country damsels.”

“By them alone could the Comte De L—— be so—for women love variety even more than merit.”

“It must be a fair one possessed both of your Highness’s friendship, and of the Elector’s, for you both interfere—”

“I have no time for idling, the lady is, in fact, Helena De R——, the Prince De R——’s sister. Remember your promise.”

The Comte was astonished by so unexpected a piece of information. To him, however, whose wounded vanity had chiefly affected him, the balm was of the most soothing kind. Helena De R—— was lovely, but delicate, in seeming, apathetic and disdainful, one that none could ever have suspected of unsought love, and active, unwearied, secret

attachment. Such, however, was hers; and the Comte De L—— fell at her feet with a warmer, a truer affection, than that puerile one which he had experienced towards Isabella. His pride, to be so distinguished, was flattered to enthusiasm, and gratitude blended with his love. Joyous and immediate was the reconciliation betwixt the Comte and the Prince De R——, betwixt the former and Isabella. And the Comte's marriage with the Prince's sister, was already foretold and looked upon as arranged at Coblenz and Schönbornlust.

A very grave, very honest, but, at the same time, a very whimsical personage, a Frenchman who had joined the emigration, and whose foible, or rather *forte*, as he himself supposed, was the offering of gratuitous advice to all whose ear he could lay hold on, the Princes themselves not excepted, did the Comte De L—— the honour, with many excuses, to expostulate with him upon his intended mar-

riage. Both the advice and person would have been forgotten by the Comte, had not after circumstances forcibly recalled them, and with them the adage, that from the mouth of the fool may drop wisdom.

His objections, or rather warnings, went to hint an extraordinary and persevering ill fate attending the house of R——, well known in France, so well known as to prevent many from seeking or receiving so dangerous an alliance. No member of it had been known in memory or tradition, to exist without being visited by some signal disaster; and the blood seemed to be perpetuated by miracle, for the purpose of keeping up the ban that hung upon them. The warning excited but the smile of the Comte. On consulting others, however, it was corroborated; yet did it make little impression upon him, save to bind him stronger to one of a race, which was deemed by fate worthy of being distinguished from all others.

Helena became Comtesse De L——, and her husband as happy as his affection promised.

To this state a year and upwards brought no change nor alloy: the warmest friendship and intimacy reigned between the united families of the De R——'s and De L——'s. And whilst the Comte forgave Isabella, and loved her as a sister, Helena's attachment to her sister-in-law became, as is natural to woman, warmer still.

Fortune in the meantime fulfilled none of the sanguine hopes of the emigrés. Republican obstinacy and hardihood overcame all the zeal of the royalists. Their great allies were but lukewarm in the cause, or at best prosecuted the war with all the tardiness and pedantry of the last century's tactics. The Rhine and its borders became the actual seat of war. The froth of emigration was wafted far from Coblenz, whilst the army of Condé, in which the Prince De R—— was enrolled, and to which the Comte De L—— was at-

tached, struggled with chivalrous and despairing valour against the superior forces and indeed superior skill of their enemies.

The Comte De L—— placed his wife in his castle, situated in a remote valley, not distant from the bank of the Rhine, which he hoped, from its remoteness, might escape the devastations of the republicans. The Princesse was often her companion, but more often she would persist in following her husband to the army, that she might tend him wounded, or perform a wife's more melancholy duty. It was in vain to dissuade her from such acts of devotion. The example of the females of La Vendée, whose enduring reached our ears, buoyed her up to emulate their example, and, alas! their misfortunes. She was *enceinte*, and for the first time; yet even this could not remove her a day's journey from the action and the camp. The Comtesse De L—— was, at that period, in a similar situation, having

previously given birth to a daughter, whom the Comte named Helena after her adored mother.

In one of the many actions, that took place about this period, betwixt the French republicans and their enemies, the former after a hard-contested combat were victorious, routing and pursuing the vanquished with a zeal, that valiant resistance had excited. In this affair the little army of emigrés, which had stood out the field later than their German allies, found, towards its termination, their retreat cut off. The victorious divisions of the enemy had in their pursuit got betwixt them and the Rhine. Death awaited every captive. The direful tidings spread along the Rhine, and soon reached the Princesse De R——, who did not delay to wrap herself in peasant garments, and endeavour to pass the republican posts towards her husband. None were near her at the time to dissuade, and

their counsels, even had there been, would have been disregarded.

Under cover of the night Isabella approached those passes guarded by the republicans, and which in her assumed disguise she hoped to traverse under cover of the darkness. But they were too vigilant; the devotion of the wives of the emigrés was known; and as all communication was sought to be cut off between the intercepted body and their friends, a close watch was kept. The Princesse De R—— was arrested in the attempt to pass, recognized by some traitorous Trevites, in the Republican service, and detained. She was not the only female whose courageous attachment met with a similar ill-fate; and with some others in her predicament, she was confined for the night, and guarded in a cabin within the lines of the army.

She afterward conveyed to her friends an account of the anxiety and pain, in which she passed this sleepless night, and of the mingled

agony and joy, that she experienced, when at day-break the shouts of Condé, the war-cry of the emigré band struck upon her ear, and resounded through the Republican camp. It was the little intercepted army of Royalists, who resolving to escape or sell their lives dearly, had attacked the Republicans with the intention of cutting their way through them. Through the window of the cabin and the dim dusk of morning, Isabella partially beheld the combat—the onset of the emigré heroes, the startled republicans running hastily to arms, and routed at first, whilst their cry of *Vive la Republique* yielded to that of *Vive le Roi, les Bourbons, et Condé*. By degrees the masses gathered, the tumult increased, the sounds of strife bore witness to a mortal and contested struggle. Isabella described the pain, the rage, she felt at not being able to join the fortunes of her husband and her husband's friends, to escape or perish with them. The uncertainty of their fate was dreadful to her.

She was at length relieved from continued suspense, and by how dreadful a process ! A kind officer of the republicans informed her, that the emigrés had with desperate valour succeeded in cutting their way through, but that full three-fourths of their number had fallen in the attempt. He gave her the permission to go, guarded by a soldier, and seek amongst the slain, to discover if the Prince, her husband, had there fallen.

With gratitude she accepted the terrible favour, and commenced her search with a sinking heart. Many of her sex were busied like her, some seeking for friendly faces, glazed in the paleness of death, whilst others merely plied the trade of stripping and rifling the dead. How many a noble form did she gaze on in doubt,—how many a casque uplift from the pale forehead it covered, in terror,—how many a well known countenance did she mark clotted, effaced, the pride of the lip and nostril still there, but in death, and all this without a

tear. She became at length wearied, sick. The Prince had not fallen—else he would have been found amongst these heaps of nobly slain. No—he had scaped. She was re-conducted to her prison.

The republicans were exasperated by the success of the Royalists, and more so by the excessive loss which they had suffered from the little band. The soldierlike generosity, which the armies of the Rhine had hitherto, and indeed in general, shewn towards their unhappy compatriots in the ranks of their enemies, and towards the relatives of those who happened to be taken—in which their conduct was, to their honour, contrasted with the armies of La Vendée—was now for an instant suspended. All the captives taken were instantly ordered by the *representant du peuple* that accompanied the army, to be conveyed either to Metz or Nancy, and brought before the bar of a revolutionary tribunal. Isabella was led a prisoner to Nancy.

The Prince De R——, free but wounded, soon learned the circumstances of his wife's captivity. He joined the Count and Countess De L——, and every plan that invention could devise, was thought and meditated betwixt the friends for the liberation of Isabella. They even feared for her life ; although she was not a native of France, and could not by marrying have transgressed its laws, still the savage Court was known to be merely actuated by vengeance, and by a wish to rival the sanguinary verdicts of the capital. In this the fears of the Count and Prince were justified. Every plan failed for her liberation, and the last emissary returned with tidings, that the prisoners *en masse* had been condemned to the guillotine, without the judges having taken the trouble to examine any particular case, and distinguish betwixt the different degrees of the several captives' culpability.

The Prince De R—— no sooner learned the truth than he rushed to the frontiers, or

rather caused himself to be dragged thither, as his wound still kept him confined to a litter. The Comte De L—— accompanied him in a journey, that could terminate but in his destruction. The friends, however, were fortunately stopped by hearing that the Princess had been respited, from being recognized *enceinte*; and this not only rendered them sure of her present safety, but led them to hope that the authorities of the republican town could never have the barbarity to enforce so sanguinary a decree against an innocent victim.

The moment that he was restored to health, the Prince made his way in disguise and surrounded by perils to Nancy, where he lingered, unable to penetrate into the prison of his wife, although he received daily tidings from her.

In this abode of misery Isabella De R—— brought forth a son, and about the same time the Comtesse De L—— presented her husband with an heir. How bitter to both was

the double event, which in other circumstances would have been productive of the extreme of happiness.

When the child of Isabella was born, the revolutionary judges, who always affected to garish and cover their cannibalism with the show of humanity, decreed, that as they had respited her life in order that she might produce a citizen to the republic, on the same principle they would still allow her to live, in order to nourish the little citizen. One would be shocked to see the pedantry of law ingrafted on so inhuman a code, were it not in favour of mercy. Indeed the very judges themselves were perhaps inclined to pity, but dared not, consistent with their own safety, indulge in it, unless by some such affectation as the present, such an adoption in their verdict of the revolutionary cant of the period. By their decision, six months' further respite was given to the mother, who after that time was to be consigned to the guillotine. As six months was

a term beyond which the existing state of things could be supposed to survive, the decision was considered as absolute grace. There was still one fearful proviso—the child must live. If fate took it from the world, there could be no excuse for still extending the boon of life to a wretch that had forfeited it to the laws as the wife of an emigré.

Isabella was informed of this exception to the grace extended to her. The mother smiled as she looked upon her first-born, with the thought that were it taken from her, to follow it could be no pain.

This mixture of barbarity and humanity filled the Prince, the Count and Countess, with the deepest anxiety. What dreadful, what anomalous times ! That anxiety was materially increased by learning that the infant was a weakly one. “The confinement, the wretched air of a prison,” said the Countess Helena, “will tell against its days, and that of its mother. Would that our little healthy babe were

Isabella's, since the thread of her precious life depends upon her child's survival."

A parent's and a husband's anxiety placed a hundred emissaries and messengers to bring daily tidings of the Princess and of her child. Every day too, it was hoped, would bring accounts of a change in the party uppermost in Paris, and a consequent relaxation of rigidity in the provinces. But no—all was adverse—terrorism still spread its sable wings over the land. And the health of Isabella's child decayed. She thought not for herself; she watched her pining infant unconscious, in her anxiety for it, that the spark of her own life at the same time languished—and the last sands of both were running. If she did think on this, it was with a melancholy pleasure.

The Prince heard every day of the gradual decay of his child and of all his hopes. He hurried to the Count. He had gained the gaolers,—not to favour the prisoner's escape—to that they could not be won—but to admit

a healthy child to be exchanged for the princess's dying babe. The Prince and the Countess Helena immediately sought around. Wealth, favour, all earthly goods were promised to whosoever would part with a child. No one could be found. The Prince was in despair. "She shall have mine," said Helena, taking her infant from the cradle, while the Count heard her in horror and admiration. It too was *his* heir, his hope,—yet could he not gainsay the generosity of the Countess.

To a trusty emissary the child of the Comte and Comtesse De L—— was given. He executed his undertaking with good faith and success. The dead child of Isabella, was taken from before her, and the living substituted. Her life was saved.

It was a disorder that had raged in the prison, which had finally carried off Isabella's infant. It seized her suppositious one, the young hopes and heir of De L——. Isabella knew not how precious was the little charge.

She tended it with equal care ; but, owing to her insensibility which at first rendered her incapable of receiving tidings or directions, she was spared the agony of then knowing that her friends had sacrificed their child for her.

It perished too, the lovely babe of Helena. Alas ! ————— The Princesse De R—— survived her prison, and was restored to the arms of her husband, while he himself was, after a time, restored to those of his country. The Castle De L—— was in mourning ; and her little daughter, Helena, alone remained to cheer her drooping mother.

Time was not allowed to the De L——'s to indulge in sorrow. An army of French at the very period invaded the Electorate. The Austrians opposed them. It was a grievous campaign for the Rhine ; the French, irritated by the loss of a young hero, who commanded them, committed every cruelty and devastation. The Count De L—— obeyed his sovereign in joining the troops of Austria. A detachment

of the French, in his absence, surrounded his castle-residence, plundered, and set fire to it. The Countess Helena never recovered the terror and the subsequent hardships she endured. She too perished, bequeathing to the disconsolate Count, her never-fading memory, and her infant Helena.

There was a mystery thrown over the disappearance of the Count's infant son. But one or two of the domestics were acquainted with the truth, necessarily kept secret at first, that the suspicions of the savages of Nancy might not be awakened. After the fire, it was believed that the infant had perished therein. It mattered little, save that the latter and untrue report has given birth to rumours, that the heir of De L—— still lives.

It was with the purpose of establishing so melancholy a fact to his house, that the Comte De L—— has himself drawn up this memoir.

CHAPTER VII.

FRITZ too perused the Count's memoir, and was equally interested with myself in its contents. "How it will delight her, whom it concerns most," said he, as he folded it for the purpose of conveying it to Helena. "There can be no treason surely in having thus acquired a knowledge of the misfortunes and generosity of our host's family." I felt some qualms, nevertheless, upon this score, and proposed going with it to the Count, to state the way in which we had procured it. But Fritz said that he had especial and paramount reasons for making Helena acquainted with its contents.

In the mean time Jost, the adroit Jost, did not fail to perceive that his sanctuary had been visited. All our care could not regulate the papers as they had been. And his acute eyes saw at once where even the position of a single sheet had been altered. On further examination he missed that document so important to be replaced, so damning an evidence if produced against him—the Count's memoir. Who could be the plunderer? That was the principal point to be discovered. The suspicions of Jost turned alternately upon all the inhabitants of the castle, from the Count to his fellow-servants. The student he calculated to be otherwise employed; and finally his ideas fixed on Schrueber as the most likely person to pry into his secrets. He therefore, with the same honest, alluring, braggadocia face, kept bustling as gay and flippant as before, keeping a close eye upon every movement of the Baron Schrueber, to the delight and entertainment of Fritz, who saw at

once that the traitor had been alarmed without becoming aware of his discoverer.

Other enemies were plotting to harm the student, and at least turn him forth from the predilections of the Count. As, however, more than a slight cause would be necessary to make the latter forget the debt of gratitude he lay under to the youth, it was determined by Schrueber and Madam Milberghausen, who talked together over this important point, to leave Helena and the youth uncontrolled, and seemingly unwatched, to their free converse and devices; and that thus thrown off their guard, some opportunity would unfailingly occur, to afford the Count proofs that a greater intimacy, than was consistent with the promise of the student to him, existed between the student and Helena.

The imprudence of the lovers seemed indeed unaccountable, and to pass all bounds. They deemed perhaps the ancients, as they termed Schrueber and Milberghausen, similarly ab-

sorbed with themselves. And though they mocked at the malice and mean cunning of the Baron, they took no care to guard against their becoming the objects of both.

At length it befel, or was so arranged, that the convalescent Count, bestirring himself at an unusual hour of evening, interrupted Fritz and his daughter Helena enjoying a *tête-à-tête*, and seated together in that friendly or loving position, which was rendered necessary by their perusing at the same time a manuscript held in the hands of both.

His first glance was at them, and an angry expostulation was about to succeed it, when his second glance caught the manuscript, which immediately directed his thoughts and suspicions in another channel. It was his own Memoir. He seized it, and demanded of the surprised pair, how they became possessed of such a document. The student's crimsoned countenance bore all the semblance of guilt. He related the manner in which it had fallen

into his hands, and called me to witness the truth of his assertions. The Count was with difficulty convinced, but he was at length, or seemed so. After some moments of thought, of vexation, thought terminating in an angry smile, which was easily construed into a fresh conviction of the worthlessness and trustlessness of men, he desired that no mention of the circumstance might be allowed to escape, or to reach the ears of Jost above all others.

“You have read this?” said the Count to Helena.

She said, she had. “It was for your perusal, but—” the Count seemed so struck and absorbed by the unexpected discovery he had made concerning Jost, that he had not strength or inclination to speak upon the subject which had brought him to surprise his daughter and Fritz. The first rush of his anger had been turned aside, and he was too distracted to collect his passion afresh. He therefore left them abruptly, and retired. While they experienced

more anxiety and pain from this species of relieve, than if the torrent of anger had at once been poured upon them.

Schrueber and Madam Milberghausen were in great disappointment and perplexity to perceive that no scene whatever followed the discovery which they had planned. The silence and troubled demeanour of the Count was unfathomable to them. To all appearance their plans of vengeance failed, and Schrueber declared, that the commission opened in a few days in Mayence, and that his departure on the morrow was necessary. I myself indeed formed a similar determination.

On the morrow the Comte De Laach called his daughter to him, and questioned her respecting her own conduct and that of the student. She denied and contradicted strongly, but simply, all her parents suspicions.

To her, however, he had to reproach no breach of promise. Fritz he taxed directly with that want of honour, which went to can-

cel all the gratitude that the Count owed him. The student was equally indignant in repelling the charge, but with little reason on his side, the lack of which, as in most cases, he endeavoured to make up by warmth.

“I deemed, young man,” said the Count, “that if your ways were wild, extravagant, beyond, in short, all proportion of reason, your honour was strained also to the same enthusiastic pitch; and that I should not have to reproach you at once for a superfluity of patriotism and public spirit, and a want of honesty and self-respect.”

“You are wrong, Comte De Laach,” replied the student, “and from no other breathing man would I suffer, much less answer, the reproach. I have not o’erstepped my word given——”

“Not to marry Helena De Laach forsooth, —I now call to mind those words of impertinence, that at the time of utterance I passed over, looking more to the tenor than the exact

words of what I required. Are you the Jesuit, Sir, to throw mock-syllables in men's eyes, and cheat them of their confidence by subterfuge?"

"I sought to keep, I kept the very spirit of my promise."

"Account then for appearances."

"I cannot."

"Our acquaintance therefore ends. Re-seek your university. Make peace with the high powers you have offended, and from whom I hoped to screen you."

"I despise them, have been guilty of no crime, and will not stoop to ask what I do not need, pardon."

"You have made one of revolutionary societies, nay, been a leader—even though ye were boys, your avowed principles surpassed those of most hardened men. The right and duty of assassination was the leading principle of your code. I have that code."

Fritz started, thought of the wily Jost and

his ways, of which however the Count profited, it must have been in ignorance of the manner in which documents and information were procured.

“I had broken with my old comrades,” said Fritz, somewhat angered, “and now may re-join them.”

“Beware, young man. I do not say, that I have withdrawn all protection.”

“I am no criminal,” continued the student, “I seek your good opinion, not protection.”

“Well, we need use no more words. What ever has been said by me, is far too much, considering that I may find myself your judge, in my capacity of president, ere long; ’tis what I would have rejoiced to avoid.”

Jost at the moment rushed in, with looks of terrified innocence, to whisper in the ear of his master.

“Speak out your tidings,” said the Count, shrinking from the traitor.

"A body of Prussian Gendarmerie approach the castle."

Helena, affrighted, rushed in with the same words.

"They come with some dispatch," said the Count.

"They are over-many, your Highness, for couriers."

"Young man, you hear, and stir not."

"The toils have been too artfully spread," said the student: "I am here alone, under your safe-guard."

"There has been some traitor amongst us," cried the Count, looking upon Jost. But the imperturbable countenance of the valet pleaded innocence, and in this case with sincerity.

"M. the Baron Schrueber," said he, "had dispatched many couriers from Bröl within these few days back."

The Count was struck with the greater likelihood of this suspicion, for he had observed

from their first meeting in the unfortunate boar-chase, that the Baron had conceived a grudge against the youth.

“Let us descend,” said he.

And the Gendarmerie were met in the hall by most of the inhabitants of the chateau, collected. When the mission of the officer was demanded, he replied, that he came to arrest and conduct to Mayence, Frederic Lufer, student of the university of Heidelberg, and a fugitive thence; accused of having been a leading member of societies, formed for the troubling of the public peace in the confederate states of Germany, and for getting rid of the leading men of these states by assassination.

The Count wished to learn, who had been the informant, and who had signed the warrant. Schrueber's name appeared to the latter; himself had signed it. The Comte De Laach crimsoned with anger, and with something more. He asked to see the Baron, ignorant

that his brother of the Commission of Inquest had taken his departure that morning, for Mayence, on urgent business, he had informed Jost, and at an hour in which he was unwilling to disturb the Count in order to pay merely his parting respects.

Helena during this scene was in despair, about every instant to fling herself at her father's feet, and retained with difficulty by Madam Milberghausen, and by the student himself, who pointed out the impropriety of her betraying interest in his fate before so many by-standers, and at the same time, the uselessness of entreaty, where all seemed placed beyond both the power and expectation of the Count.

“ I will myself with my daughter and family,” said the Count, “ proceed to Mayence, to-morrow.—You, Sir,” to the officer of Gendarmerie, “ will use your prisoner with all lenience and respect.”

In a short time the police soldiers, five in

number, a force great for peaceful regions, set forth with their captive, and took their way towards the Rhine, through the valley of the Bröl. The castle was abandoned to silence, but not the less to trouble and anxiety. It was no longer the fit place for strangers, and those who were so, immediately took their departure—I myself, among the rest, after a brief conversation with the Comte, who hoped to meet me at Mayence. He dispatched Jost on the instant, to make preparations for their reception. The Count had, it seemed, taken no notice of the deceitful practices of his valet, perhaps for the wisest of reasons. I observed Jost accoutring his steed for the journey, with haste, and saw him set forth with alacrity on his mission.

Fritz, in the mean time, and his guard, rounded the Veitsberg, and wound along the valley, in the several moods that may be supposed to befit the mind of a lover separated from his mistress, and policemen in the land

of easy tyranny, where hand was never raised against them. They paced on in perfect security, each man intent upon his pipe, that universal occupation of a German's life. Their leader had thrown the reins on his horse's neck in order to strike his flint and fungus, and was just conveying a lighted morsel of the latter to his pipe, when his steed abruptly halted. They were now coursing the base of a steep, though not very lofty precipice, on the brink of the stream, which rolled at the bottom of a profound and rugged channel beneath them. A little in front, the face of the precipice rose immediately from the stream, and being of solid rock, had defied the original contrivers of the road, from pursuing it in that direction. It consequently was made to cross the stream, over a bridge, and pursue its course on the opposite bank. This very bridge the Gendarmes had passed some hours before, and never did arch echo more firmly to their tramp.

Now, however, it was shattered, broken down, an utter ruin. The rider, when his horse's pause directed his attention to this impediment, was much amazed to account for it. The river, though in winter well qualified for such a feat, was now shrunk considerably lower than the stone whence the arch had sprung. No piece of artillery, or overloaded wain appeared sunk, bespeaking itself the cause of the crash. Either gunpowder, or many active hands must have been employed so effectually to destroy the means of passage.

Germans, especially with pipes in their mouths, are not very speedy at coming to a resolution, and ere the guards of Fritz Lufen had arrived at any such point, they were attacked on a sudden by a party of students and young peasants, who—for the satellites of the Prussian police as little expected such a feat, as they expected the falling of the sky—succeeded at the first onset, in precipitating the Gendarmes into the torrent's bed, and

rescuing from their fangs their equally astonished captive.

The ridge above the road, though precipitate, was not high, and the discomfited cavaliers had scarcely raised and extricated themselves from the torrent, when the party which had put them to the rout, had dispersed and disappeared. Fritz found himself once more amongst his ancient comrades, who hurried off with him to their old haunts.

It is easier to conceive than describe the tumult which the news of this adventure excited at Bröl. Since the last century, when the rugged Rhine bank was thronged with robbers, so daring an attempt had not been known. And under the patriarchal government of their ancient bishop, or the vigorous rule of the French, any resistance to established power had grown an act of madness beyond all precedent. The feat, too, excited some painful fears throughout the village ; as it was likely in consequence to be visited by, and made

perhaps, for some time, the station of a detachment from Coblenz, and perhaps, a troop of Prussians from Saar Louis, the billeting and approvisionment of which would prove a serious burden to the little community.

The wise heads of Bröl were accordingly put together to avert the dreaded calamity, or at least to render it as slight and of as short a duration as possible. And this, it was soon agreed, was best to be done by affording every possible aid and information to the discomfited powers of the *haute police*, in re-capturing the rescued prisoner, and securing the audacious band that had liberated him.

This I gathered in my passage through Bröl, where my arrival was somewhat retarded by the obstacle which had facilitated the rescue of the student. My old acquaintance, the innkeeper, and more especially his lady, was full of the misfortune, as she called it.

And I could not but augur ill for the freedom and safety of Fritz and his imprudent comrades, from the zeal and accord with which the worthy Brölites declared against them.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE gorge of the Rhine valley, after presenting some of its wildest and noblest scenery, opens at Andernach, a most interesting town, of Roman origin, and still bearing in its walls and towers and many other relics the marks of its immortal founders. On both sides of the river the hills recede, a bounded plain extending some distance on through which the Rhine winds from Coblenz, where, or at least a little past which, it is again enclosed by steep hills. The road traverses the left bank; on its right is seen the beautiful palace and village of Neuwied, famed, and to its misfortune, as the most practicable spot for a military passage of the Rhine. Here Cæsar

first, and the unfortunate Hoche last, effected the difficult feat. A pillar to the memory of the latter stands on an eminence. This war-harassed region is thickly strewn with such memorials. That of Marceau farther on, placed beneath the batteries of Coblenz, and amidst those innumerable swarms of Prussian soldiers which garrison them, is a melancholy object, the tomb at once of his individual heroism and his patriotic hopes. It is worthy of having caught the attention of the muse of Childe Harold, which in general seems to have been but moderately inspired by this lovely and chivalrous region. The contrasted beauties and sublimities of the Lemane and the Swiss Alps were more congenial to the pilgrim's spirit.

A simultaneous turn of road and river brings the traveller of a sudden in view of Coblenz, certainly one of the most beautifully situated towns in Europe. Nixed in the angle betwixt the meeting of the Rhine and Moselle, its gay white houses, the bustles of its crowded quays,

and the throng of boats and rafts on the two rivers, have a most lively effect. Its numerous and beautiful steeples, two of which rise from every church together, give it the appearance, which is afterward found to be but the appearance, of a large and populous town. On the opposite bank of the Rhine, to which it is connected by a bridge of boats, rises the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein.

“Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shattered wall,
Black with the miner’s blast, upon her height,
Yet shews of what she was, when shell and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did light;
A tower of victory! from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watched along the plain:
But Peace destroyed what war could never blight,
And laid those proud roofs bare to summer rain—
On which the iron shower for years had poured in vain.”

It no longer answers to the description. The effects of mine and shot are no longer visible. The face of the precipice is white with warlike masonry, and will, when finished, bristle no doubt with artillery. Prussia has rendered it stronger than ever. Its name bespeaks at the

same time its impregnability, and the military spirit of the country to which it belongs—"the bright stone of honour" is its translation. In Prussia the same sentiment is spent in christening a redoubt, which in France or England would have hallowed the scene of some unhappy lover's interview or fate, the abode of greatness or of genius.

Entering Coblenz, I recalled the memoir of my friend the Count, and thought that the throng and gaiety of the emigration was all that was wanting to make Coblenz a delightful town. At present it is but a huge guard-house: the drum never ceases to resound within and without its walls. Every house of respectable appearance is either a barrack or an hotel. Soldiers and stray visitors complete its scanty population.

I sauntered forth on foot to enjoy the view from Ehrenbreitstein, and having descended upon the bridge of boats, I found my passage stopped by four boats and their united plank

flooring having been withdrawn, in order to leave an open space in the midst. I looked for the cause, and saw it in the shape of an immense raft, which came slowly down the stream. It resembled a floating village. Houses of various dimensions, formed of planks, were scattered on its surface, whilst a crowd of the inhabitants, so they might be called, were busied to and fro. There were three immense oars plied before, each by six men, as many by as many behind, and by the means of them they steered their unwieldy vessel toward the aperture of the bridge. The raft had been cut most probably from the Black Forest at the extremity of the Rhine near its falls; there put together, launched and manned; it had floated down the king of streams, its destination one of the Dutch ports on the ocean. A native of America would smile at the interest thus attached to a long river-voyage, his own country affording so much more magnificent; but to an European

hat on the Rhine is nobly and uniquely romantic. I was so interested at the passage of the Leviathan and its population of a crew, that I expected a shout at least from those on the bridge to be re-echoed from the wanderers on the raft. It passed without a single greeting—never did I behold such an example of phlegm. It floated on—the bridge closed—and I passed forward to Ehrenbreitstein.

The summit of the fortress presents one of most beautiful views on the Rhine. The valley of the river is seen far up betwixt its boundaries of hills, some twenty ruined castles, of celebrated names, all in view, and one ruined convent standing on a picturesque island not distant from Coblenz. Northward the eye reverted to Neuwied and Andernach. I was enjoying the scene, not however without alloy, as every neighbouring eminence crowned with rampart, battery, and entrenchment, marred the true and natural spirit of the place, but I was interrupted or rather checked in my

tacit anathemas against warfare and its followers by hearing a chorus of martial voices at a distance. They neared by degrees. It was a battalion of perhaps five hundred men, young conscripts or recruits apparently, for they were without fire-arms, returning from drill, and as they pursued the zig-zag path up the fortress, they all thundered out in passable accord a splendid national hymn, the words of which I could scarcely catch ; but their spirit and effect will ever dwell with me. Musical taste is the romantic side of the German character. I thought of five hundred raw English recruits, and what an attempt at any enjoyment in common, any such solace, returning from the fatigues of a sunny day's drill.—Somehow or another I have had a respect for Prussian soldiers ever since,—a respect that all the exploits of Blucher had not previously inspired me with.

Arriving the next day early at Boppard, a little town on the Rhine, southward of Coblenz, I

found a crowd, and bustle, and popular ferment, such as is rare in these halcyon realms of absolute power, and which my fortune in twice witnessing, both here and at Bröl, was something singular.

“What! have Fritz and his friends been here too?” said I to myself with unmeaning mirth.

I did not repeat the remark. After a great many unanswered questions and miscomprehended answers, I at length learned the unusual cause of such tumult to be—a recent murder. Who was the victim? That was yet to be ascertained, for none knew. It appeared, the unfortunate Herr, whoever he was, and a person of respectability his dress denoted him, had been journeying south along the Rhine, and had taken his passage most likely, for even that was only conjecture, in the *Jagdschiff*, or *Coche D'Eau*, from Coblenz to Mayence. As in this voyage the boat went against the current, dragged by the force of

horses, it was rather tedious. About two or three miles' distance from Coblenz the river makes a considerable circuit, which may be shortened by pursuing a by-path over a mountain and through a forest to Boppart. This path was often taken on foot by the passengers in the Jagdschiff, and having been unfortunately undertaken alone by the individual in question, he had been robbed and murdered by the way. The *Coche* had continued its voyage, and this very probable conjecture remained yet to be confirmed. The body, however, had been found upon the by-path in question, the pockets of its habits rifled, and its death-wound apparently inflicted by several thrusts of a rapier or rapiers.

Every traveller, as he entered the town, was brought to view the dead body, in hopes of some one thus recognizing it. As I however declared myself a stranger and an Englishman, I was spared that ceremony, a circumstance I afterward rejoiced at. Some one from Mayence

arriving about the same time, recognized the body immediately upon beholding it, and thus satisfied the people of Boppard upon one important point. The murdered man was no other than the Baron Schrueber.

Considering the victim, my suspicions immediately fixed upon a certain band of persons as perpetrators. The wound, inflicted by a three-sided rapier, the very species of weapon carried by Fritz, increased the suspicion. How near the idea approached to certainty, may be conjectured, when I learned that the band of students had not lingered on the Veitsberg, but had actually passed Coblenz, and were seen in the neighbourhood of St. Goar.

This event, with its consequent train of reflections, caused me to continue my journey with most sad and unpleasant feelings. I had grown somewhat attached to the youth, in spite of his wild ways, his strained modes of thinking, and extravagant rules of acting.

But I had deemed his avowal of such diabolical principles as the right of assassination, to be the mere supporting of a paradox for argument and address-sake, somewhat like our own schoolboy themes upon the death of Cæsar, and as remote from being drawn into precedent as example. The present crime, if what seemed but too probable should prove true, was an illustration of the doctrine quite to the letter. Schrueber was a partizan and an *employé* of despotism, mean, selfish, intriguing, and had played falsely with Fritz, and the Comte De Laach, his protector. And to cut him off thus summarily, might have been prompted and palliated, both as an act of vengeance, and one of duty.

Escape o'er a continent so rigidly guarded and secured by passports and police, seemed not to be possible. And a disgraceful fate apparel likely to close the career of my acquaintance, and of the lover of Helena.

CHAPTER IX.

ONE of the most beautiful ruins on the Rhine is certainly that of the little Gothic church at Bacharach. Its situation is most picturesque, o'erhanging an irregular village of immense antiquity. It is built of the soft red sand-stone, which is the material also of the public buildings at Mayence, and which gives to them so warm and singular an effect. Left to the chisel, and capable of receiving from it the most delicate and fantastic form, it becomes indurated by exposure, so as to defy both atmosphere and time. The lofty Gothic windows of the church of Bacharach—I visited it about noon, and even at that hour it took

fifteen of my paces to measure it in shadow—are as perfect, glass excepted, as when the building held the feudal lord of the neighbouring castle, and all his vassals, bowed before its altar.

At Bingen, a few miles farther, the closed or narrow valley of the Rhine begins. Betwixt it and Mayence, mounting its course, its banks assume, but by beautiful degrees, that flat and level character, which they retain as far up as Bâle. The gradations which mark the space betwixt the flat banks and the mountain ones, are beautiful. It is the region betwixt Bingen and Mayence, and is called the Rheingau. There the hills no longer rise in precipices from the river's brink, but raise themselves at intervals, with gentle slopes and intervening plain betwixt each other, and between them and the stream. Each hill is covered with the most precious vines. Rüderheim is opposite to Bingen. Johannisberg, or the mountain of St. John,

rises at some distance behind, whilst afar, about two miles to the east of Mayence, may be perceived the steeple of the famed village of Hochheim, which with us gives its name to the vintage of the surrounding region. It is itself perhaps the most uninteresting village within view of the Rhine.

Mayence is reached through a mile of what, to an unmilitary eye, seems a chaos of fortifications. Napoleon deemed it one of three bulwarks of his empire. And it is yet an object of such jealousy and importance, that whilst the sovereignty of it, the empty sovereignty, has been bestowed upon Hesse Darmstadt, the garrison of it is always half Prussian, half Austrian. Mayence is a venerable town, and some of its narrow lanes, lined with ancient edifices, recall the ancient abodes of Faust and Guttenberg, those fathers of printing, who here made the first successful essay of their art.

I took up my abode at the *Weiss Ross*, de-

terminated to await some farther circumstances of Fritz Lufen's fate. The Comte De Laach and Helena, I learned, had already, so long did I tarry on the lovely road, arrived at their residence in the *Grosse Bleiche*. They were greatly shocked to hear, as they passed Boppard, of their late guest's fate. It was melancholy, in spite of the mean and intriguing character of the victim. The Count entertained the same suspicions with myself, and they filled him with pain and regret. Helena, notwithstanding appearances, would not listen to such a supposition, and declared it impossible; yet she too had her doubts and terrors. The Count said, that Fritz and his comrades would probably be in Mayence that very evening, as a force had been sent to apprehend them, which it was not likely they could escape, especially as they had been tracked by the inhabitants of Bröl southward, and were supposed to be in the neighbourhood of Bingen. Jost even had deposed before the authorities

that he had himself seen Lufen near Boppard about the passage of the Coche D'Eau, which was the supposed and probable time of the murder.

The Count was not mistaken. The students were found betwixt Bingen and Kreusnach, and were conveyed, with Fritz at their head, that night to the prisons of Mayence.

The affair soon began to occupy every tongue and thought in the town. Fritz Lufen became as much an object of abhorrence in some quarters, and of interest in others, as his comrade, and it should seem, his model, Sand. The proceedings of the Commission of Inquest, to whose jurisdiction the part of examining and judging the culprits fell, were looked to with considerable anxiety. In a town garrisoned by Austrians and Prussians, publicity of trial is, of course, not existent; the good Mayençois, indeed, never aspired to such a Jacobin boon, as the making of magistrates so observable by, and consequently

amenable to, public opinion. The examinations and all proceedings were secret, principally in writing; and curiosity was compelled to await the judge's final verdict, ere it could be gratified respecting any case.

Ten days of awful silence past. A muscle of the Comte's face could not be imagined to betray a hint or symptom of what was passing at the Commission, which now sate daily, resolved to sift closely the crime, to which one of their members had fallen a victim. Helena's anguish was truly pitiable; and she could scarcely look at her parent, who considered her as the cause of his having come in contact with the student, and who had not yet pardoned her that and other imprudences.

The situation of the Comte was sufficient, indeed, to sour his temper. By the mean, underhand meddling of Schrueber, who sought to ingratiate himself with the great ruling powers of Germany by conveying to

them information, and by the treachery of his servant Jost, who, for more solid reasons, had been induced to betray his master, and give copies of his papers; the confidant and delegate of a great sovereign, as he was, stood somewhat suspected of liberal leanings. His having met and harboured this mad, imprudent student in his house, was an unfortunate accident, most capable of being taken advantage of. And all this came out before the Commission, of which although he was the President, yet it contained others, brother-members, who both envied and mistrusted him; and who, if they had not hitherto done so, were ready, no doubt, to seize upon such an opportunity as the present, to commence, or even affect, hostility to him for interest-sake. In addition to this, Prince Metternich himself was at his summer residence of Johannisberg, prying into, and overhearing all, with the cunning of a statesman of the old school of intrigue—one of whose maxims was, its

being far safer to suspect in the wrong, than to confide where there was the smallest shadow of appearance against the soundness of the person to be trusted.

These considerations, which did not fail to strike the sagacious courtier and statesman, rendered his conduct difficult and delicate. To betray no suspicion, till the present affair had passed, was his first resolve; and Jost, accordingly, retained all his master's wonted benevolence and confidence.

With respect to Fritz and his comrades, the Commission at length closed its labours as to what seemed to them the principal point to be cleared, viz. how far the present crime was produced by the secret societies, and the system of affiliation to them, which prevailed in the German universities. Of this, though it may have remained the decided opinion of the inquisitors, they were able to extricate little satisfactory proof, that is, little that could be conclusive enough to allow of

publication. And the process then became restricted to its more interesting part, the trial of the actual guilt of the inculpated; which, be it remarked, was previously taken for granted in the political examination. This, however, being subject to the re-consideration of the regular criminal court, in case of the appeal of the condemned, more strictness and justice became requisite. At this period of the question too, secrecy became no longer indispensable, and the circumstances of the evidence soon transpired from those present, or presiding.

These were few, but strong. The students were in the neighbourhood of Boppard at the time of the murder. Schrueber, as the person who had issued the warrant of capture, was obnoxious to their leader. And, what was damning, the sword usually worn by Fritz, had been found near to the spot, and in a state that bespoke it to have inflicted the wound. The students could bring only each

other's evidence to prove their absence from the fatal spot. Fritz could say little, beyond an indignant disavowal of enmity against Schrueber, a declaration of little weight. It was, however, proved, that he had not worn a sword when captured, and that it had, consequently, been left at the castle of the Comte De Laach. This latter part might be doubted; and, even were it true, one accustomed to enter the castle by secret passages (that had been brought forward) might have easily regained possession of his weapon, subsequently upon his rescue.

Then why had they abandoned their university? Had they not defended the conduct of Sand, and avowed the right to commit the very crime, which they now seemed to shrink from? Very many similar questions were put, without receiving any thing like a satisfactory answer. And the judgment was no longer doubtful.

It was in this state of things, while haunted,

in common with all Mayence, by thoughts of the unfortunate, if not criminal student, I sought to distract them by bestowing attention upon the sights which the ancient Rhenish city boasted. With this view I had entered the cathedral, from the busy market that bustled before it, and not without having observed the marks of cannon-shot on its ruddy octagonal tower or steeple, some of the bequests, and not the least detrimental, of the late war, to the old electoral city. Its ancient monuments attracted my curiosity—as did its verger, who seemed altogether to forget the dethronement of the archiepiscopal elector, for he was as magnificent both in bearing and habiliments, as proud, as greedy, and as impertinent, as the immediate servant of a little independent sovereign was likely to be. But his manner, I suppose, like his garments, were traditional, and fashioned after his predecessors of the good, old, electoral times.

Having succeeded after some time in shaking off the attendance of him and his halberd of a mace, I stood gazing at the monument of Fastrada, the wife of Charlemagne, when a votary in the act of supplication at one of the little side chapels or shrines, struck my attention, as, it seemed, my figure struck his. He was meanly clad, in the coarse blue linen dress of the peasantry, and it was not till the third or fourth glance, that I recognised him to be Fritz's uncle, the Friar Guy.

The old man had not only quitted the dress of his order, which he had lately assumed, but was in disguise. For, although he was of middling life, his garb bespoke one of the lowest condition. The cause that brought him to Mayence, was intelligible. He approached me in the act, and under the pretext, of asking alms, and said,

“I have been seeking you, Herr stranger.”

“For what possible purpose, good friar?”

“That you may convey from me a message to the Count.”

“Why not yourself deliver it?”

“They consider me an accomplice in this supposed crime of Fritz’s, at least in his other ways; and I dare not, therefore, make myself known. You will do my behests, they go to right innocence.”

“Well!”

“Inform the Comte De Laach, that he must save Fritz Lufen—”

“A likely, or a possible command to be obeyed!”

“Nay, more; that he must clear him of all guilt.”

“If I could at the same time inform him *how* to do this, my errand might have some excuse or success.”

“A wily statesman, Sir, cannot be at a loss for the *how*, provided he be made fully certain of the necessity of so doing.”

“Even that may be something. How shall I apprise him of this necessity?”

“He is implicated, tell him, with that student, whom he took up, harboured, suspected, yet did not betray. The morrow of Fritz’s condemnation will bring his own discharge from the office of President of the Commission.”

“This on the mere word of a friar, to a man of rank, the confidant of monarchs?”

“The more blind, the more near the sun. Besides, his own sagacity, his own fears will corroborate what you will declare.”

“Perhaps so, sufficiently to astonish him, trouble him momentarily,—but they are not based so as to induce the experienced man of affairs to act upon them.”

The friar mused, and saw the necessity of farther confidence.

“I have seen the declaration of what I assert, and that in the hand-writing of Prince M——.”

“Where? how?” replied I, incredulous.

“Let us withdraw behind this pillar,” continued the friar. “You know, how we, the old, the idle, and the mendicant, delight in *espieglerie*—”

“A stronger word would apply perhaps—”

“No, not in the cause of right. Well, I have ever suspected Jost, and more especially since Fritz informed me of his discoveries, I made it my task to watch the traitor. He had set forth too suddenly from the Convent Lake for my vigilance, and even when I had discovered his departure, his hurry and speed surpassed mine; still by the aid of friendly barges and friendly postilions, I overtook him at a little inn, where he rested for the night. You know these places. The noble’s valet slept in the place of honour; the poor friar had his straw laid in the granary above. I had but a few rungs of a ladder to descend to where Jost reposed. Resolved to emulate Fritz’s cunning and success, I stole into his chamber, and, at the risk certainly of being

taken for a robber, I extracted the portefeuille, which he had cautiously placed beneath his pillow. Ten minutes allowed me to peruse its contents, which astonished and terrified me. They chiefly concerned the Comte and Schrueber—had I known then all that had just happened, I had certainly ventured, despite of risk, to have retained what I then read.”

“You have a copy or summary of these writings?”

“No more than an unfailing recollection. One was a letter from Prince M—— to Schrueber, obtained whilst the Baron was visiting the castle, in the way that the valet rifled every corner, in answer to Schrueber’s information respecting the fugitive student, and the Comte’s predilection for him. It ordered the arrest that afterward took place, that thus Schrueber was forced to by superior authority, and which, being unable to excuse to the Comte, he took that abrupt departure

and journey so fatal to him. The letter then alluded to the Comte, recommended dissimulation to Schrueber, and promised finally, that if all the latter's suspicions were well-founded, if the student was found at the castle, afterward convicted of having belonged to the secret societies, and of having taken a lead in their plans, the Comte De Laach, who had so forgotten his rank and duty, as to favour or harbour such a young firebrand of liberalism, should instantly be suspended from the office of President which he held, and replaced by Schrueber's self. Such were the machinations of the Baron."

We paced up and down the aisle.

"This may well alarm the Count for himself," said I, "and make him exert all his prudence and sagacity to ward off the blow. But the attempt to save Fritz will certainly be neither the prudent means to that end, nor the one, that he will be likely to adopt."

"Will not gratitude towards him, who sends

this information, this warning, prompt him so to exert himself."

"It may. But taking the will for granted, the power will be wanting, utterly wanting, notwithstanding your idea of a statesman's finesse. How prove the guilty innocent, when every proof is there to convict him."

"No proof, I tell you, Fritz is as innocent as I am."

"Who then is guilty?"

"Heaven knows—some one perhaps we least suspect. The Count at any rate must preserve Fritz, at his own life's peril!" said Guy, with vehemence.

I could not but smile.

"And here," continued he, producing a diminutive velvet bag, less even than a purse could be, "you must convey this to Helena De Laach—but no—there cannot yet be such haste requisite. I will myself deliver it. What church does she frequent at vespers?"

I could not inform him.

“There is one at the end of the *Grosse Bleiche*, on the Parade—and this is Sunday—Farewell. You will convey my message.”

I nodded, and lost no time in hurrying with it to the Count. He was enjoying a promenade along the Rhine bank with his daughter, or rather taking one, for even the lovely prospect, that extended before him beyond the nobly-flowing river, failed to touch except with pain a mind anxiously occupied.

We chatted, after mutual greeting, on divers topics of the day. As he was able to converse in English, I instantly opened the tidings I had to convey to him, notwithstanding the crowd and bustle round. Their import, however, soon induced him to seek his carriage, and in a drive through labyrinths of fortifications, I fully delivered the message of Friar Guy.

“Why would he not see me himself,” said the Comte, “he need not fear arrest with me—and yet—” the thought of Fritz taken in his

very residence struck him—"he is right. I know from other sources, that what he tells is not without foundation. You see, Sir Englishman, what public life is in the lands of despotism. Office, character, consideration, are all held on the oriental tenure of being accompanied with good fortune and success. The merits of a man, his past character, his talent, are never weighed, when by accident he trips."

"Yet the character I have heard, even from you yourself, of your monarch—"

"Nay, talk not of the liberal inclinings of despots; they do but coquet with freedom, like Alexander of Russia. A thorough, honest tyrant were better far than their capricious fits of acting Trajan. They are sick of the sweet power, at times, and would flavour it with that agreeable bitter, popularity. They are the amiable in their morning-frocks, and not the less despots the next hour in their robes and sceptres. Besides, they always

delegate their power, and never their benignity. And tyranny, instead of being mildened by transmission from hand to hand becomes from the process rather distilled into its most concentrated spirit. Such men as M—— But now is not the time for vain declaiming. I will drive to Johannisberg to-morrow, and face the storm. They say, that the impending water-spout is best escaped by firing a cannon-shot into the mass."

"You are over-poetic for a politician, Count. M——, if he overheard you, would draw a huge increase of suspicion therefrom."

The Comte De Laach smiled. "I will brave the lion in his den," said he, "to-morrow."

"But Fritz," said I, "the Friar urges that he *must* be saved; *must* was his word, and presses it as necessary to your own safety, as well as out of gratitude to him."

"I have had enough of being over grateful for slight favours of late," said the Count;

“I am willing to do my utmost for the youth, —but the Friar is mad—what has his safety to do with mine? Myself first secure, I can best aid him, if aid indeed of any kind be not long since out of the question.”

“Is that all the hope?”

“I have none for him, save in some miracle.”

“And Jost, what think you of him?”

“I will give the scoundrel tether, and he will surely strangle himself at the last.”

“If the Friar seek of me an answer.”

“I am grateful. I see no hope of saving his nephew, even if innocent, as he asserts, unless the Friar can come forward to prove that innocence. The student may appeal from us, and time at least will be gained by the new trial.”

CHAPTER X.

ON the morrow the Comte De Laach did drive to Johannisberg, that vineyard productive of the cream of Rhenish, and of ministers of state. After a brief turning over in his mind of the principal points to be borne in view, the topics to be touched on, those to be leant on, those hinted at, those avoided, on the character of the personage he was about to visit, his weak side, which, like that of most upstarts, was his dignity, the Count dispelled resolutely the whole brood and batch of mean and unworthy thoughts, and forcing his mind to contemplate and enjoy, no easy task, the scenes of nature around, he endeavoured thus to gain that freshness and ease of spirits,

which might, more effectually than cunning, enable him to cope with one of the master-geniuses of policy and intrigue.

Although he arrived early, the Count found the great minister's levee, for such he did not dispense with even in retirement, already filled with far-travelled courtiers and minor diplomatists from the diet at Frankfort. Not mingling with the crowd, lest he should seem to be paying a mere visit of complaisance, he strolled through the grounds and gardens of the chateau, until the roll of departing carriage wheels became less frequent, and then entered to seek an interview with the great diplomatist. This was not easily obtained. And notwithstanding the rank, place, and consideration of the Comte De Laach, he had to fight his way through an army of lacqueys, some as diplomatic in manner and cunning as their master, who held the shield of sevenfold excuse before the door of the minister's cabinet. The Count, however, was patient,

bold, and persevering; and it at length opened for his announcement.

The countenance of Prince M—— was, what we in our isle should without hesitation declare vulgar. His enemies in Germany have been known to allow it noble. But respecting what in face or mien constitutes *distingué*, our taste is the Antipode of that of the Continent. A ministerial smile dwelt on his features, and was so habitual, that the dimples or wrinkles, which it caused, had become indented, rigid, had preserved, in fine, the mark of expression, without needing any act of the will to reproduce them. A man of business by nature, and no more, plodding, mechanical, and grave, capricious fate had made him minister, and thence necessity and duty had prompted him to become the statesman, the courtier, the voluptuary. He had assumed the latter character even as an act of duty, such being one of the received marks of Austrian aristocracy. For the rest, I must refer my readers to Casti, the

poeta Cesareo, or poet-laureate of the Austrian empire, who, having had every opportunity of studying Aulic ministers and counsellors, had sketched the chief of them at length, in his portrait of the Dog,

“ Er egli, per esempio, un po' mordace,
Un po' burbero, un po' provocativo,
Un po' avido, un po' falso, un po' vorace,
Un po' arrogante, un po' vendicativo;
Ma questi difettuzzi non li conto
De' suoi massimi meriti in confronto,” &c.

Such was the personage, who greeted the Comte De Laach with affected dignity and deep dissimulation. The Count, though liable to be disgraced by the Prince's influence, was yet neither Austrian subject nor *employé*, and it required some finesse to crush him. The Comte too had spirit and talent, and might retort. We do not press the heel upon the serpent's head, even when we have caught him, without consideration. Such was the reflection of M——, as he brightened up his false smile to falser intensity.

The enemies thus in presence, and having amicably saluted and greeted each other, the skirmishing began, dexterously on the Comte's part, who touched on divers subjects, most seasonably for his purpose, but which would be needless and enigmatical here to give. At length Schrueber's fate was mentioned. The Prince coloured. There was both personal and political dread mingled in his feelings upon that catastrophe. And he seized the opportunity, as cold persons always do when they get a fit theme to declaim on, to burst forth into invective and *seem warm*.

"If it were the student's crime," said the Count, "this second act of the kind is indeed alarming for Germany."

"If!" rejoined the minister: "The Comte de Laach surely has had means of arriving at some certainty in this affair."

"Doubtless, both as President of the Commission, and as an host of one of the youths, to whom I was grateful for having saved my life."

“Indeed. I had not heard this latter circumstance.”

“Its having been omitted speaks little goodwill towards me in the friend who acquainted you with the other details.”

“Eh—what, how, whom do you allude to?” said the minister, with the most blank of astonished countenances.

“I allude to the unfortunate Baron Schrueber himself.”

The minister made no answer. And the Comte related to him the circumstances of the hunt.

“You are aware then, Sir,” said M——, “that Schrueber corresponded with me.”

“I conjectured it,” replied the Count.

The minister smiled, but not at ease. He knew, that Schrueber possessed letters of his, nay, that he most likely had them about him when way-laid. The student had become possessed of them, and through the student the

Comte De Laach. These were Prince M——'s thoughts. The papers were important, they were not written for the light.—What was, in that hand?—He wished to be repossessed of them.

“You must have proofs, my Lord Count, of my correspondence with Schrueber, else you would not have ventured, yes, I repeat my phrase, you would not have ventured to throw out the supposition. Let me have those papers.”

“Which?”

“You force me to be plain—those found upon the murdered man.”

“And these you suspect in my possession. Your emissaries, Prince M——, have been about me long, in my house, in my chamber—I know them, and what they report—you might have spared yourself that trouble, your sovereign its expense. They have found nothing disloyal to convey, and have therefore

fabricated falsehoods. On these grounds, and scarcely on these, I can forgive the insult you have just insinuated."

"You mistake, you mistake me altogether," said M—— hurriedly. He saw, that he might as well take the credit of being frank, as the Comte seemed acquainted with all. "How is a minister, situated like me, to refuse information when it comes?" He rose, and retiring to a little bureau of *cartons*, he drew a packet of papers forth, and flung them on the table. "There, Comte, are your valet's reports. I expect something in return for such an act of confidence."

The Comte De Laach loosed the string, and turned over the papers, while the Prince called a secretary, and affected to dictate, or probably did dictate a letter on some important Hungarian affair of state. This done, he turned to his visiter.

"I have looked over these, and sincerely thank your Excellency," said the Comte De

Laach, "I think too, that owing to some strange and to me unaccountable chance, I am able to give you in return what you seek." Here the Count drew from the midst of the packet a letter, and handed it to M——.

He was thunderstruck. It was his own last letter to Schrueber, the one commanding the student's immediate arrest, and hinting the Count's disgrace, and which the Baron could not have received but the very morning of his departure from the Castle of the Convent Lake. Schrueber must have carried it with him. It must have been on his person at the time of his death, and the murderer had taken it. The Prince suspected some *supercherie*, that perhaps the Count had himself and but just now, inserted it among the papers. He looked on its back, however, and perceived the private mark always stamped upon his own papers.

"Your valet, what's his name?" said M——.

“Jost.”

“Must have become possessed of this paper, and sent it to me in mistake with others.”

“That he was possessed of it on the Rhine, I have proof,” said the Count, and he related the Friar’s account to me.

“On the Rhine!—did he not accompany you to Mayence?”

“No, preceded.”

“What day?”

“Such a one.”

“Jost then must be the assassin of Schrueber.”

“I rejoice, Prince, that you yourself have struck out this conclusion.”

“Yet it is inconvenient, when one’s own rogues so over-act roguery, as to bring themselves into the traps they lay.—Yet what could induce this fellow to destroy Schrueber? In your service he did not want for gold.”

“Of late his false ways and treachery were

discovered,—nay, some important papers of mine were found in his possession, taken, and restored to me. He was at a loss to find out who had fathomed his villany, and I have reason to believe, that his suspicions at length rested upon Schrueber.”

“That gives some semblance of cause to the crime.”

“We will examine more ere we decide. Your Excellency will allow me to bring this evidence before the Commission. There it will remain secret, yet bring forth the truth.”

“It must be so: yet even there I had rather as little were known as is consistent with justice.”

“Depend upon me.”

“I do, Comte De Laach, with as much pleasure, as my momentary and slight distrust was accompanied with uneasiness.”

“Let me then never, I pray you, cause your Excellency pain;” and the Count withdrew,

not a little satisfied with the success of his interview.

The first act of his return to Mayence, was to put Jost under arrest, a sudden trick of fortune that appalled the traitor.

Meantime the report spread, that the Comte De Laach had been disgraced and degraded from his place of President, owing to some complicity having appeared betwixt him and the student. The first seeds for such a rumour had been long sown, and the Count's visit to Johannisberg, the motive of which was easily divined, made those who delight in the mischances of others, take the Count's disgrace for granted. Mayence, like all towns not metropolises, is a huge village, in respect of scandal; and the report had already settled into an allowed fact, ere the object of it had quitted Johannisberg.

Chance too, which had fixed for that day the taking place of a great military ceremony, rendered the crowd of whisperers, of ejacu-

lators, and commiserators of the Comte De Laach greater and more illustrious than ordinary. The ceremony was the benediction of the colours of a Prussian regiment, at which baptism all the princes of the little states round made it their business or pleasure to attend. There was old Hesse-Darmstadt and his Kron-Printz, Hesse-Homberg, in his splendid white hussar uniform, contrasted with a rubicund face. Then there were Nassau, Baden,

“ With many of the military set,
Exceedingly remarkable and braided,
And not at all unwilling to parade it.”

A tent was erected in the middle of the square, containing an altar, crucifix, and other paraphernalia of *Catholic* worship. For although the King of Prussia was a Protestant Prince, and moreover one at heart, as he has already proved himself by his correspondence with his relatives of Anhalt-Coethen, yet since this regiment was raised in his Rhenish pro-

vinces, which are for the most part Catholic, the Catholic form and ceremony were wisely and liberally chosen to hallow their banners in the eyes of the soldiery. What made this the more remarkable, was the fact that most of the officers, dignitaries, and princes assisting, were themselves Lutheran. I was myself present at the scene, and felt it an imposing one. Finer troops never stood in line, officered, 'tis true, by mere boys, yet discipline seemed to be perfect. The custom too, which the subaltern officers are obliged to conform to, of carrying knapsacks, even on parade, was an anti-aristocratic and levelling regulation, that surprised me in despotic Prussia, more even than her monarch's principles of toleration.

The benediction of its colours, however, was but a pretext to the prince-folk to assemble, to chat over their mutual affairs and interests without exciting talk or suspicion—in short, a species of ducal and military con-

versazione. Princely interests, however, were overlooked amongst the rumours and conjectures respecting the Comte De Laach. And these even circulated amongst the citizens and rabble collected to behold the ceremony. Amongst these was the indefatigable Friar Guy, with whom I interchanged a few words, he declaring with sorrow, that he had no hope left for re-establishment of his beloved convent, now the Count was in disgrace; "If he hath lost influence and power at court," said Guy, "he will be less willing to part with what is left him at home. And poor Fritz is now utterly abandoned to his fate, without hope or friend."

The Comte De Laach's return to Mayence in the midst of his supposed disgrace, was both amusing and useful to him. He marked many an averted countenance, many a half salute, and saw many a summer-friend wearing a winter-face.

I repaired to the *Grosse Bleiche* to learn, or

at least perceive the symptoms of what kind of success had attended the Count's journey. More than usual gaiety prevailed in his residence. The Prince and Princess De R——, the Count's ancient rival, friend, and mistress, had arrived from Paris. The former was travelling on some mission from the court of France, to that of one of the northern powers, but consented to tarry a few days at Mayence. I was anxious to behold in the Prince De R—— and Isabella, the personages of the Count's memoir. The age of hero and heroine were, however, past for both. Their joy at meeting with the Count was extreme, and every immediate interest and object of anxiety were forgotten in recollections of old times. Helena was admired by the Princess, declared to be the image of her mother, and every mark of womanly endearment was lavished in order to flatter and win the affections of the daughter of her lost friend.

Poor Helena, however, was too pre-occupied

to respond to all this kindness. She was silent and dejected; and the Princess, unable to enliven or comprehend her, was at length obliged to interrupt her husband and the Count, who were absorbed in years past, with abruptly asking, "What has the girl?"

This excited the Count's attention towards his daughter: "True," said he, "even I have cause not to be so gay—we have been all anxious and interested of late for a silly youth, who was with us on the Convent Lake—a wild student—suspected wrongfully of murder, and, my faith, well nigh condemned for it too."

"*Wrongfully* then even *you* allow at length, father," said Helena.

"Ay, girl, I believe the true assassin has come to light."

"Now, thank Heaven."

On the demand of the Princess De R——, the Count related all, or most of the circum-

stances of the student's story, which interested them not a little.

"For my part, however," said the Prince, "I think justice never errs. And even if she had taken the life of this mad youth for a crime which he did not commit, he at least merited it for the principles which he dared to avow."

"Nay, but a boy, a student, an enthusiast, so easily led astray by mistaken patriotism, preached in midnight conciliabules."

"As soon as the young hand is strong enough to strike a poignard, the tender age of the criminal should not protect him. We have seen so many examples, the fanatic of Schoenbrunn, and Sand of late. If these young enthusiasts are not kept under, we know not what may come of it."

"It is indeed fearful," said the Count, "but there are hallucinations, that the scaffold and its examples will but confirm, by giving dignity and importance to them. Some little

mockery would blight the system, root and branch, principle and deed, more effectually than punishment. A German Cervantes, by ridiculing this Quixotism of our universities, would convey the most lasting benefit to his country."

"And I hope," said the Princess, "that this young gentleman, who interests us *all* so much," (a glance at Helena) "will not be let loose without recanting fully this dangerous Quixotism of assassination."

"Before the Commission he was placed in view of the dead body of Schrueber," replied the Count. "Notwithstanding his admiration and professions of killing, he had never seen, I believe, such a sight before—and he was so shocked and struck, that we took his stupefaction for guilt. When after that, he heard the discourses and avowals of these principles proved against him, he confessed to have been mad and criminal enough to have entertained them, but that it required but the sight he

had that day beheld to make him abjure them for ever, if his better reason had not before prompted him so to do.—I myself then bore witness to his having broken with his comrades. But the Court was prepossessed with his guilt, attributed his recantation to fear, and my evidence to prejudice in his favour.”

“Do you know, Count,” said the Princess De R——, “I have been thinking it extremely fortunate that this hero did not save Helena’s life instead of yours.”

“Why?” asked the Count, whilst Helena’s cheek glowed.

“Seeing that gratitude, which I may call your family failing, towards him hath placed your political existence in jeopardy, in that case *her* gratitude might have placed her warm and noble heart in equal peril.”

“They are merely old friends and acquaintances,” said the Count.

“So much the worse.”

“Nay, I rely upon Helena De Laach.”

“And you may so, father,” said the girl, rallying her countenance to a smile.

A Parisian shrug from the Princess terminated the conversation.

CHAPTER XI.

ON the morrow, the members of the Commission were summoned for the examination of Jost, and the reconsideration of all the facts and evidence relative to the death of Schrueber. They entered their council-room with countenances expressive of weariness of the question, and of doubt that any new circumstance could appear to exculpate either the student from crime, or the Count from having bestowed his patronage upon a subject so suspected. The perusal, however, of a dispatch freshly arrived from Johannesburg, changed suddenly and materially both the sentiments and countenances of the members. They attempted at once to

recal for their president their dismissed smiles—Jost was instantly ordered before them—and their late apathy to business was only to be equalled by their present alacrity.

When Jost was brought forward to be examined, he confessed at once his having been in the habit of betraying his master's confidence, and took no small credit to himself, in his bragadocia manner, for so doing. He was alway amenable to authority, the fellow averred; and much as he loved, and had reason to respect his master, he could not but consider the commands of the police as more sacred, and he obeyed them in consequence. "Nay, which of your excellencies," urged the criminal, with a forcible sort of eloquence, that propitiated few in his favour, "could resist the commands or entreaties of the great Prince M—— to do his bidding, be that treason, great or small."

The valet was informed, that for his conduct, be it praiseworthy, or the contrary, no question or punishment awaited him. It behoved him

merely to explain how a letter from Prince M—— to the Baron Schrueber fell into his possession?

He had obtained it, he averred, as he had done others, from the apartment of the Baron. This, however, had been delivered into Schrueber's hands by a messenger, who had never lost sight of him, till he quitted the castle. Jost, however, insisted.

Friar Guy appeared to bear witness to his own act of espionage, which proved little more than did the letter itself, and the manner of its being procured. The damning circumstance of the very sword of Fritz having been found in the path from Reinse to Boppart, in which Schrueber had fallen, still remained an unshaken evidence against the student. The weapon too having been freshly re-pointed, bore witness to malignity of purpose. The latter, 'tis true, averred, that he had left his weapon at the castle, and his comrades, as well as some of the peasants, testified the same cir-

cumstance. But these were all interested or implicated personages. The Commission remained divided in opinion, that of some influenced by the discovered sword, that of others, by the discovered letter; and it became not improbable, that the Court, perplexed and wearied, might finally decree, after a manner suitable to the imperfectly understood justice of those regions, that both the suspected criminals should, lest the true one escape, be punished, not however capitally, but by a long or indefinite period of imprisonment or labour.

These were the tidings, that the Comte De Laach brought home to Helena and his guests. They were unwelcome and unexpected, for there Fritz had been already absolved, and all the guilt placed to the traitor-valet.

It is not to be supposed, however, that the jeopardy and misfortunes of a youth, ever so interesting and innocent, could exclusively occupy breasts, to which disasters and reverses, their own, and of the worst, were nothing new.

Each had their schemes and dreams to ponder on and further. So had Helena : but hers were wound up in Fritz's fate, in anxiety and doubt respecting him. The Princess De R——, was as interested for Helena, as the latter for the student. She perceived the symptoms, the unworthy predilection of the girl, pitied the blindness and incapacity of fathers in leaving the happiness of daughters uncared for, and dreaded lest Helena, abandoned to herself—for Madam Milberghausen had retired in despair to Manheim, after learning the fatal accident that had befallen the Baron Schrueber—might carry her sympathy for the student to the extreme of throwing herself away, in the case of his liberation.

Like a careful matron, the Princess began to meditate a preventive ; and as the most effectual and conclusive was certainly to select a fitting husband for the daughter of the Count De Laach, the Frenchwoman, for such in habit as here evinced, she had long since become,

ran over, in her mind's eye, the list of all her young male acquaintance, who happened at the same time not to be without the accidents of birth and fortune. Amongst these, her judgment was not long in making a selection. A certain Vicomte of the Royal Guard seemed every way suitable. The necessity of herself opening the negociation with the officer in question did not appal her, such being a thing of every day occurrence and success. Besides, she knew him, as one who proclaimed himself an heart-whole youth, only in search of the requisite amiability in a bride, in order to render up his heart and person.

The Princess immediately made known her kind intentions to the Comte De Laach, who was German enough to be a friend to allowing the young heart more freedom than was consistent with such a proposal. Moreover, he was national and anti-gallican, and did not like to see his German feuds go to swell the property of a French courtier, who would most probably

convert them into ignoble money at the first opportunity. But then the cause, the danger was imminent; and the Count had neither time nor inclination to look around through his young Rhenish acquaintance, even if such had been the mode. Then the Princess had written, she declared. How headlong! But she might speak to Helena.

She did so after some consideration, and with all the delicacy and management, that she deemed to be required. Helena listened sorrowfully, but calmly, declined the honour of wedding a person whom she had never seen, but did not, though the Princess had expected no less, give way to any passionate expostulations or deprecations. In short, bating the denial, which was mere matter of course, the Princess deemed her most reasonable, and reported her as such to the Count. And in despite of his lukewarmness, the letter to Paris was in reality dispatched. In the midst of these *menées*, Friar Guy made his way to the

Grosse Bleiche, and at length demanded to speak with the Comte De Laach. As his communication was supposed to concern Fritz, the guests of the Count were anxious as himself to hear it, and the Friar was accordingly introduced amidst the assembled family. In making his obeisance he fixed his glance upon the Princess, an attention that the sharp-sighted lady did not fail to return.

Guy did not seem to come upon the errand expected. For when bade to declare his business, it was not respecting his nephew's innocence or acquittal that he began, but, on the contrary, a long and tedious exordium, touching his ancient convent, its destruction, abandonment, the dispersion of its ancient brotherhood, and, finally, the strong hopes of the few survivors of the latter to be allowed to repossess their old walls, and resume their habits and profession. The Princess lost patience, and the Prince De R——exclaimed, "It is the same story as with us. Now if we laics had the

ready impudence of the friars and ecclesiastics in demanding their own, what indignant answers, and worse than words for answers, might we not expect?"

The Count informed the friar that his demand was absurd, and not to be listened to in the present century, wondering how he could be so mad as to entertain the thought, or make the request.

"Do not despise me, Count De Laach, or deem me mad, as I deserve in sooth, were I to ask ought for religion-sake of one of this century, as you say, without being otherwise emboldened to dare it. I had hopes that you would grant *me* what I ask for special kindness-sake."

"I have proved myself grateful enough to Fritz Lufen, old man, without extending more, as you now ask, towards his relatives."

"It is not altogether on his account," replied Guy. "If your excellency cannot re-

member, this lady surely will, that in former times I ventured somewhat for your sake."

The Count looked towards the Princess De R—, from whom tears fell fast: "This must be the man," said she, "who came from you to me, in the prison of Nancy, bearing that cruel gift, which had I known but then—"

"Let us not recal those thoughts. Old man, you had your reward. Why come you to trouble us this day?"

"In that you must grant my request, or regret it."

"This fellow," said the Prince, "is the most sturdy brother of the mendicant order, whom I have yet seen."

"The alms he asks too, being house and land."

"But house," rejoined the friar; "but the walls,—and liberty to beg. I will repay in value, if you make the gift."

"Well, let's hear your value."

"I trust then to your honour, Count. What I have to say is this, the infant that the Countess gave me to my trust, to convey to Nancy, never went thither."

"I would to Heaven," said the Princess, "that it were so, that it had never reached my ill-fated arms."

"It never did."

"Beware," cried the Comte, "how you trifle with a parent's feelings, and call up hopes but to crush them anew. By heaven, if you mock me, the most loathsome dungeon in Europe shall be your abode."

"And if I speak the most welcome of tidings to the Comte De Laach, the Convent of the Lake shall be my abode."

"It shall."

"Then, verily, it was my own nephew, Lufen, that these hands conveyed to this lady, in the prison of Nancy."

"And why, old man, didst thou sacrifice a brother's or a sister's son, for love of

me? Answer that, ere your narrative goes further."

"A question not over-wise, when I answer, simply to put my own blood in the place of the young Comte De Laach. The idea struck me as I beheld both infants together on the same couch, in making hasty preparations for my journey. They looked too so alike in age and feature, that but for the rags of one and the rich wrapping of the other, I had not known the difference."

"And yet that morning we offered thee ten thousand florins, to let the child incur the danger of being sent to Nancy, and thou wouldst not."

"The sum of florins were a bribe, and for one's own flesh,—the Comtedom of Laach was for the babe, and for its own sake did I trust it upon Fortune's wheel. 'Twas crushed, by my love however, not by my selfishness."

"Proceed. What didst thou with the babe.

Where are we to search? Were it in the uttermost ends of the earth—”

“It is this hour in the prisons of Mayence.”

“Ha! after purloining my offspring, thou hast bred him in the ways of villany.”

“Nay, he is not guilty. Fritz is innocent.”

“Fritz Lufen then, the student, is he?”

“The same, Fritz De Laach.”

“Heaven send, Comte,” said the Prince, “this romance be not a mere one.”

“Unaccountable the interest I took in him, a youth every way repelling, and dangerous in me to have protected. But proofs of this are requisite.”

“*I* cannot fail to know Helena’s son,” said the Princess. “A letter of hers, her last, that I have ever preserved, marks it past a doubt. The infant, that perished in my prison, wanted that distinguishing mark. I observed it even in my grief, but forbore to speak to no end upon so painful a subject.”

“An amulet too, in a velvet bag, escaped

my attention, when I changed the infants," said the friar; "I gave it to Mademoiselle Helena."

Helena produced it.

"Helena then has been in the secret," said the Princess.

"Fritz knew the truth respecting his birth; he doubtless acquainted his sister."

"This, then, is the secret of your interest, my girl, your promises and breach of them—your love was sisterly—why not have confessed?"

"I dared not father; the friar menaced to disappear, if we disobeyed him, and he enjoined silence for a time."

"But you, Sir, who stipulate for a reward," said the Count to Guy, "you seem not to think your act a crime. You exult in it."

"*You* may exult in it, and through me. If a crime, 'tis one that demands your gratitude."

"Perfect then the amends you offer, by proving him innocent, whom you declare my son."

“Demand not too much of me,” said the Friar; “’twas fear for him, that drove me to make this confession, that I so long kept in dread to disclose. Circumstance must aid. You have sent to the castle to search the cabinet of Jost.”

“Long since. Little is to be hoped from that. But come—I will to the prison instantly. Shall we not all?”

“Willingly,” exclaimed the Prince and the Princess De R——. And a carriage soon bore them to the walls which immured Fritz.

CHAPTER XII.

THE surprise of the student, who had not yet been informed of the incrimination of Jost, at such a number of visitors to his prison, was great. The silence which they observed until the Princess De R—— was satisfied that the story of the Friar was no deceit, that he really was the young Vicomte De Laach, increased the feeling. It reached at once its height and its solution, when Isabella declaring his identity undeniable, Helena sprung to embrace her brother, exclaiming that their secret was no longer one. The Comte also embraced his son; and, after the fulness of joy was past, questioned him about his early recollections.

But he had none, save of Bröl and of the Friar's cabin, until the old man, conscience-stricken for the wrong he had done the child, sacrificed all his little store of wealth, to enable his supposed nephew to pursue his studies at Heidelberg, and thus be fitted for the station, to which his birth entitled him, and to which it was ever the Friar's purpose to restore him. Fear and selfish hopes had long retarded this act, on the part of Guy, till at length the danger of the youth overcame all fear and reluctance, and forced the Friar to avowal.

Fritz had been for some time aware of his rights, but he obeyed the Friar in delaying to make the disclosure, which indeed, without the aid of that personage, could not have gained belief. Latterly, accused of a crime, of which he now felt all the baseness, and of which, though innocent, there seemed little probability of his being declared guiltless, he had resolved to suffer its punishment in silence, rather than bring disgrace upon a name that he not

only loved as his own, but had learned to respect, even before he was aware of his right to it.

The joy of all was damped and checked by the imputations still resting on the student. None had now a doubt, even if one lingered before, that his noble blood would instinctively have shunned the crime, even though the paradoxical and Quixotic sentiments of the university had ennobled it in his eyes ; but neither the rest of the public, nor of the Commission, were likely to have their judgment influenced by such aristocratic prejudice.

The only hope rested on the emissaries of justice despatched to the Castle of the Convent Lake, whose return was that day expected. And lest any favourable circumstance or evidence coming to light, and acquitting the student, might be attributed to the new discovery of his birth, it was resolved to keep the latter a secret from all ; and Friar Guy, of whose capability of silence there was a long example and proof, was enjoined to say nought upon

the subject. Meantime, the family were sanguine, and some proofs of the youth's innocence were now confidently expected.

The answer of the gallant French Vicomte, which it seems he had not tarried long in resolving and dispatching, that day arrived too—it had been fated to be one of events. He felt himself so highly honoured to be so distinguished, and destined for a near relative, by a lady of such rank, beauty, accomplishments (*et ceteras* not spared in the epistle), that he, in his own handwriting, conveyed his heart to the Princess De R——, to be disposed of, as she thought most fitting. This blind devotion on the part of the Frenchman, amused the Comte extremely, was not altogether pleasing to Helena, but was praised by the Prince and Princess, as an act and offer every way *comme il faut*. The Vicomte hinted, that could he procure leave, which it was very probable he should be able to do, he would betake himself

forthwith to Mayence, in order to obey the Princess's commands.

Helena was indignant, and entreated the Princess at once to deliver her from the sight of so mean and interested a wretch, as he who could have written such a letter. But the French lady of fashion begged her to form no such quick resolution—that the heart might be warm, even where the mode prescribed selfishness and apathy—that it was the way of the world, that is, of the French world—that affection was best sown in the plot specially prepared for it—and, in short, a world of common-places to the same effect.

Those dispatched to the Convent Lake returned to the Commission, after having carefully examined and brought away every article found in what was called Jost's cabinet. He had come away in a considerable hurry, as was evident from the state of the little apartment. The sudden departure of Schrueber must, sup-

posing the valet's suspicions of being fathomed and betrayed by the Baron, have taken him by surprise. His urgent demands to be allowed to depart instantly for Mayence, in order to make preparations for receiving his master and family there, were recollected and borne witness to by the Count. But the convincing evidence was found in the fragment of a sword, broken off from its point, and which was found lying in a corner of the valet's chamber. At Fritz's former examinations before the Commission, he had confessed frankly the rapier found in the fatal path to be his, but at the same time remarked it to be shorter than when he had worn it. The conclusion was, than Jost had secreted it, for the purpose to which it had been employed, to effect the crime of making away with one of his enemies, Schrueber, and of throwing the guilt on another of his enemies, the student. As the weapon however had been used by its original owner, as much in play and pastime as in earnest, it required

to be sharpened for the new duty to which it was destined. In the valet's tremor and hurry, while thus occupied, it had broken ; and the fragment was forthcoming as a proof.

As is often the case, too, in processes of this kind, when just sufficient evidence is procured, and that perhaps after much anxious and perilous delay, more corroboratives of the truth then come forth, when it is almost superfluous : —so many witnesses are eager to support truth already received, who have not the activity or the courage to stand forth at first to establish it. Thus it was, that fresh testimony soon made its appearance before the Commission, of Jost's movements at the period of the murder, and his vicinity to the place of its perpetration. The master of *Coche d'eau*, or Jagdschiff, himself, had seen a courier-like figure, such as Jost, watching from some distance the disembarkation of Schrueber at Reinse, in order to pursue the by-path. Others had seen him in the very path ; especially one, when he was

descending its precipitate termination, as it sinks again to the Rhine bank within view of Boppart. In short, the guilt of Jost was established to the perfect satisfaction of the Commission, and Fritz, or, as we may now call him, Frederick De Laach, was restored to his new found parent, sister, and friends.

His birth was then immediately avowed. And although slander and calumny, with such ample materials to work upon, were in this, as in every possible case, not idle, congratulations poured in upon the Comte De Laach from every quarter, even from Prince M—— himself. Fritz's comrades too were liberated, and the youth entreated of them to *humanize* for a space, as he said, and accompany him once more, though with the mere views of social pleasure, to the Castle of the Convent Lake. But they answered by abjuring the friendship of a scion of feudality, and by returning once more, the freedom and security thereto being obtained, to Heidelberg.

I regret not being able, after the orthodox fashion, to wind up my story with a wedding. But Fritz was heart-free, overflowing with patriotism, and a love of Deutschland, too great to allow of minor affections. If he abjured and contemned his old plan of furthering her freedom, by the sword and poignard, he resolved to prepare himself for acting her enlightened friend in a more commanding and worthy station. The Princess De R—— had entertained hopes of settling Helena in the world, and in her own world of Paris. But now that the necessity for such a hurried step no longer existed, the Comte would not give his sanction even to the most gentle force being employed on the occasion. And Helena resisted so determinately the thought of bestowing the slightest regard on a swain who could fall in love by proxy, that the Princess was obliged to abandon all hopes of the Vicomte, and I of finishing my chapter with her espousals.

The family betook itself once more to the

Castle of the Convent Lake, the Comte with the intention no longer of rendering it habitable for a moment, but of restoring it to all its feudal splendour. The little town of Bröl was immediately in a fever of joy, and all the region of the old Electorate felt its dignity restored in the line of one of its oldest families. Friar Guy, and five surviving brethren of his gown, were duly installed in their ancient convent, "all a world too wide" for their shrunk numbers and importance. But amidst the penance and mortifications voluntarily undertaken by the brotherhood, the suppression of the vanity of their order was not one. They regained their ancient abode, their ancient habits, but not their ancient happiness:—the old respect borne towards them was departed, the charm was gone. And Guy was soon as disconsolate an inhabitant of a cloister, as he had been a discontented citizen of Bröl. But this was beyond the Count's power or gratitude to amend.

Jost was condemned, such is the lenience of

justice in these countries, not to capital punishment. The Prince and Princess proceeded, after a time, upon their diplomatic mission. The De Laachs repaired to Berlin, that Frederick might be presented to the Prussian monarch,—and I mounted my now sleek Fleming in search of new scenes and adventures.

END OF THE CASTLE OF THE
CONVENT LAKE.

L' ENVOI.

HAVING in a manner formed a sort of personal acquaintance with my reader—the more agreeable and durable, in that we are each unknown to the other—let me entreat his company a few miles farther, as I have some excuses to offer, and he no doubt some demurs, or, perhaps, disgusts to vent, touching the three volumes of narrative and peregrination, that we have both accomplished.

If he have no objection, we will take the road from Mayence to Frankfort. The journey is short, a good omen for this “*post-liminary preface*” of mine ; moreover, not abounding in the

picturesque—for the Maine smacks as little of such, as the commercial walls which it laves—and after drinking a *coup* at the little *Gasthaus*, at Hochheim, in honour of its unrivalled grape, we shall meet with no object to interrupt our critical converse, till Frankfort, that commercial Oasis of republicanism, amidst a surrounding continent of kingly rule, is reached.

“Gentle reader,” said I, “what think you of my volumes?”

“Hum!” quoth my gentle reader.

“Nay,” rejoined I, “you and your family are alway prone to be severe upon second attempts. You let the first pass with half-shut eyes, but pounce upon its successor as a thing too glaring to be overlooked. Say,—be just, but merciful.”

“My good fellow, your egotism pleases me not.”

“Yet it has been recommended to me as giving an air of veracity to narrative.”

“ Veracity, Sir! *your* veracity, a romancer—”

“ Fu quel ch' io dico, e non v'aggiungo un pelo,
Io 'l vidi, io 'l so——”

“ Bah! But touching egotism, it is worth no writer's while to indulge in it, unless he does it frankly and fully—he should either be or feign himself a character, or else sink the first person altogether. It is only the egotism of the cipher I, of which the world is weary.”

“ *Grand merci* for the hint—I shall be either more impertinent the next time, or as modest as a story of past days and the third person can make me.—What next?”

“ Why, Sir, that I do not approve of short stories, or tales, as ye are pleased to call them. For sketches of the day, and of its life, whether fashionable or not, for those written by the witty, the comic, the satiric, they are certainly the best vehicle; for there the interest of the story is its least attraction, there characters, such as we see every day, and are not

worth developing through three volumes, are delightful, when sketched, laughed at, and dismissed, in a hundred pages. Not so are characters less familiar to us, removed from us either by time or space, being historic or foreign ; these, if they be worth glancing at, are worth developing. And to bring them on the scene, and dismiss them as soon as the reader begins to take an interest in them, serves merely to annoy him."

"But when the object of the writer is to depict the habits, the modes of feeling, thinking, and education prevalent in foreign countries, the characters of individuals are in his view of subordinate consideration."

"He has then the excuse of system for being uninteresting. But let me speak, Sir, in your behalf, not in mine. Think of the destructive, and at the same time, the unnecessary wear and tear of imagination, in inventing fresh characters for every two hundred pages. It is impossible that you can take sufficient interest

in shadows, that you conjure up for an instant, to endow them with that dramatic life which is the breath in the nostrils of ideal characters."

"If a writer, however, has neither dramatic power nor intent, why accuse him of not attempting the impracticable?"

"You are then obstinate in your opinion, I see, and in your resolve to continue this sketching, fitful, come and go, species of writing. *A la bonne heure*. But in that case, I repeat, stick to the present times, to existing follies, to virtues *à la mode* (if there be any); and, as in the 'English in Italy,' let your contemporaries and countrymen figure on your familiar canvas."

"I shall be accused then of personality."

"*Eh bien! vous y gagnerez.*"

"In sale perhaps, not in character."

"Bah! have you ever broken bread with a man, and made use of the insight into his cha-

racter that his hospitality afforded you, to fill a *piquant* page in print ?”

“Never—never closed hand, or spoken word in society with any, whom I ever after permitted myself to pen.”

“And is not that sufficient ? If writers keep out of the preserves of society, may they not take down their game, when met with on the common ground of public fame. Great men and small men must pay the tax of notoriety, to suffer quizzing as well as lauding. And those who rejoice to see their names in the columns of a fashionable journal, need not be outrageous to see their likenesses in the pages of a fashionable novel.”

“There is an outcry against the thing, however, not even to be scaped, when different characters are combined in one, where all are generalized, as impersonal as they may be.”

“How can this affect you, who are so completely unknown and incog. ?”

“The more close the mask, the more should I be unwilling to take advantage of it.”

“Right conscientious truly, and whom may I have the honour of conversing with?”

“It would afford me this moment the greatest pleasure, to be able to tell you, that I might contradict one or two reports, that I should wish to contradict. But I am absolutely tongue-tied—sillily so, perhaps, but not the less firmly.”

“It is not one hair’s consequence.”

Frankfort soon appeared in view, o’er a lovely region of vineyard and villas, the Maine winding through to the right beneath us, laden with myriad barks, bearing travellers and merchandize betwixt the Rhine and the commercial city. The night both made my companion forget me, and me forget my portefeuille, in which these last remarks had just been scratched. It is enough, said I. This last sheet shall be dispatched, thus terminated, to my worthy publishers, to whose shoulders and

feelings I henceforth transfer all trouble and anxiety respecting them. I did not exactly "cast it on the waters," as a poet might, but being a mere proser, cast it "into the post," after having, with a mixed feeling of tremor and satisfaction, subscribed

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